THE SOCIAL VALUE OF THE GOSPEL

GARRIGUET

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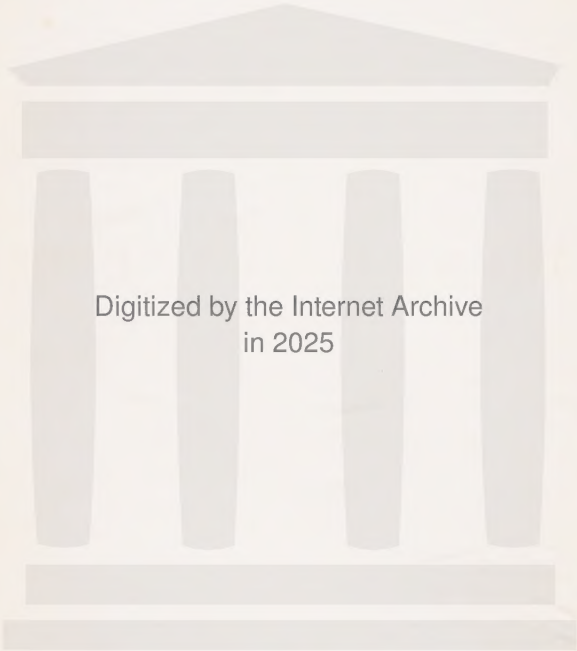

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THE SOCIAL VALUE OF THE GOSPEL

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BY

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PREFACE

The basis of durable social work is religion. Its motive power is charity in its Christian sense. The general principles of social well-being and the true spirit of Christianity lead us back to the teachings of Christ. Hitherto we have possessed no Catholic work in English on the precise subject of the social import of the Gospel; and since correct views upon this particular matter are necessary for those engaged in social work, Miss E. Willson accepted the task of translating the volume of M. Léon Garriguet entitled *La Valeur Sociale de l'Évangile*. The scope of this work is confined to the teachings of the Gospel, the teaching of the Apostolic writings being merely incidentally referred to. Neither does the author deal in any way with the motives or spirit of Christian charity. The purpose of the book is to state the position taken up by Christ on the general questions of wealth, poverty, property, community of goods, socialism and economic progress.

It may be here mentioned that quotations have been taken either from the English originals of works referred to, or from English translations of other works, whenever such exist. For the assistance of the general reader a brief account is supplied of the authors whose works are cited in the course of the volume.

HENRY PARKINSON.

OSCOTT COLLEGE,
January, 1911.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR

The author of the present work, M. l'Abbé Léon Pierre Garriguet, is widely known in France, and even in this country, for his writings on social subjects. Born on November 13th, 1859, at Nayrac, in the Department of l'Aveyron, he made his preliminary studies at the seminary of S. Pierre, near Rodez, and went through his course of philosophy and theology at Rodez, S. Sulpice, and finally at the Institut Catholique, Paris. He joined the Institute of the Sulpician Fathers, and occupied the position of professor of dogmatic theology and history at Nantes (1885-1894) and of moral theology at Lyons (1899-1900). He was appointed rector and professor of scripture at the philosophical seminary of Autun (1900-1909). He then became rector and professor of pastoral theology at the seminary of Avignon (1909-1910), whence he was transferred to La Rochelle, where he now holds the office of rector and professor of social economics. Archbishop Sueur, of Avignon, nominated him his vicar general, and he has been honoured with a seat in the chapters of Avignon and of La Rochelle.

In addition to the gifts of a clear mind and a facile expression, he has the rare merit of perceiving what are the things that matter in the busy world of to-day. All his writings bear the stamp of the practical teacher. His chief publications are classed under the heading of *Traité de Sociologie d'après le Principes de la Théologie Catholique,* of which the two chief divisions are *Régime de la Propriété* (one vol.) and *Régime du Travail* (2 vols.) ,1909, 2nd edition. Scarcely less useful, if less ambitious in form and extent, are the booklets which he has contributed to the invaluable series which bears the name of *Science et Religion* (Bloud et Cie, Paris). This collection is indebted to him for *Questions Sociales et Écoles Sociales* (nn. 152-153), 6th ed., an indispensable introduction to the study of the social question. Nothing could be more opportune than his short treatises on Private Property, Capital and Labour, as shown in the following titles : *La Propriété Privée* (nn. 154-155), 4th ed., *Le Salaire* (n. 264), 5th ed., *Le Contrat de Travail* (n. 292), 3rd ed., *L'Association Ouvrière* (n. 293), 4th ed., *Capital et Capitalisme* (n. 304), 5th ed., *Production et Profit* (n. 358), 3rd ed., and *Prêt, Intétrêt, Usure* (n. 408), 3rd ed. He has in hand, and will shortly publish, *Les nouveaux aspects du Socialisme : Syndicalisme et Confédérations générales du travail.*

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

OBJECT OF THIS STUDY

The Beginnings of Catholic Social Reform, p. 1. Socialist Reform and Christian Reform, p. 2. Christian Reform based on the Gospel, p. 3. The Teaching of Christ and the Tradition of the Church present a definite Social Doctrine, p. 4. Chief Points, p. 5.

CHAPTER II

THE OPINIONS OF THE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS

(1) The School maintaining that Christ's Teaching was before all Reformatory and Social.

Reasons in support of this View, p. 8. Christ is regarded merely as Man, p. 9. As a Philosopher, p. 11. As a Demagogue, p. 13. A Revolutionary and an Anarchist, p. 14.

(2) A Second School of Thought finds in the Teaching of Christ a Doctrine purely Religious without any definite bearing on Social Problems.

His Mission explained to be essentially Spiritual and Supernatural, p. 18. No attention to Earthly Concerns, p. 19. The Moderate Section of this School regard His Teaching as simply Non-social, p. 20. The Extreme Party declare it to be Anti-social, p. 22.

(3) A Third School qualifies the Teaching of Christ as Religious, Social, and containing the

PRINCIPLES NECESSARY FOR THE TRUE ORGANIZATION OF SOCIAL LIFE.

The Material Interests of Life not neglected by Christ, though held by Him to be of Secondary Importance, p. 28. Those, however, who recognize an unquestionable Social Tendency in the Gospel are classed as Conservatives or as Progressives, p. 30.

CHAPTER III

CATHOLICS AND THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF THE GOSPEL

Catholics and the Social Study of the Gospel, p. 37. Work of non-Catholics, p. 37. Imprudence and Exaggeration of certain Catholics, p. 39. Such mistakes afford no reason for distrust, p. 40. The new School reveres the Authority of the Church, seeks its Inspiration in her Traditions and avoids novelty, p. 45.

CHAPTER IV

WHAT IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE GOSPEL

Christ's Mission not primarily of a Social Character, p. 48. The Elements of a definite Social Programme not to be sought in the Gospel, p. 51. The Gospel not a Textbook of Social Reform, p. 53. The Preaching of the Gospel not the beginning of any Revolutionary Movement, p. 58.

CHAPTER V

PROOF OF THE SOCIAL VALUE OF THE GOSPEL

(1) THE GOSPEL AND THE PERFECTING OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

Social Reform impossible without a Reform of the Individual, p. 64. Force and Law incap-

able of bringing about Social Reform, p. 66. The Gospel and the Moral and Social Advancement of the Individual, p. 70.

(2) Restoration of the Family by Christianity.

Importance of a right Organization of the Family, p. 74. Before Christianity the Family in a state of Disorganization, p. 75. 1. Christianity has restored to Marriage its Unity, its Indissolubility, and its Sanctity, p. 79. 2. It has re-instated the Woman, Wife, and Mother, p. 81.

(3) The Gospel and its Vindication of the Rights of Human Personality.

1. Sad lot of the Poor, the Unfortunate and the Slave before Christianity, p. 88. 2. Christianity condemned Abuses and Inequalities, p. 91. 3. It restored the Dignity of the Unfortunate, p. 93. 4. It brought back that Brotherhood which antiquity had lost sight of, p. 96. 5. It proclaimed the Substantial Equality of all Men, p. 99. 6. It laid down the Principle that all have a right to Liberty, p. 102.

(4) The Gospel and the Spirit which it brought to the World.

1. A Spirit of Peace, p. 108. 2. A Spirit of Unity, p. 109. 3. A Spirit of Charity, Love, Patience and Forgiveness, p. 109. 4. A Spirit of Equity and Justice, p. 114.

(5) The Gospel and the Social Evolution.

1. The Gospel introduced a Leaven into the World, p. 118. 2. The trend of Progress in Christianity and in Civilization, p. 119. 3. Christianity admits all that is True, Equitable and Practicable in Socialism, p. 122. The Radical Difference between the Spirit of Christianity and the Spirit of Socialism, p. 124.

(6) The Gospel and its alleged Anti-Social Character.

1. The Gospel teaching leads neither to Improvidence nor Idleness, p. 130. 2. Nor does it imply Indifference to Life on Earth and Human Progress, p. 133. 3. Nor does it lead men to ignore the Heart's Lawful Demands, not to forget Sacred Family Relations, p. 136. 4. Nor does it lead to an Excessive Disparagement of the Individual, p. 139.

(7) The Gospel and Democracy.

1. No essential Opposition between Christian Principles and the Fundamental Principles of Democracy, p. 143. 2. Any Opposition between Christianity and Democracy has its origin elsewhere than in an Antagonism of Principles, p. 145. 3. Christian Principles essential to the Success of Democracy, p. 148.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOSPEL AND THE GOODS OF THIS WORLD

(1) The Social Environment of our Lord's Ministry, p. 152.

(2) Our Lord's manner of Life during His Public Ministry, p. 156.

(3) His Teaching about this World's Goods.

1. Riches make Salvation difficult, p. 162. 2. Riches do not make Salvation impossible, p. 166. 3. Renunciation of Wealth the way to Higher Perfection, p. 170. 4. Private Property nowhere Condemned, Communism nowhere Countenanced in the Gospel, p. 172.

(4) Communism in the Early Church.

1. Never Rigorously Practised or Obligatory, p. 176. 2. Essentially Local and Private, p. 179. 3. Attempted at Jerusalem but unsuccessful and of short duration, p. 184.

(5) Poverty and the Gospel Teaching.

1. The Gospel nowhere represents Poverty or complete Renunciation as Virtues at which all should aim, p. 187. 2. Christ did not declare Poverty, either Natural, Unavoidable, or Unpreventible, p. 189. 3. Our Lord has commanded us to Relieve Distress, not to perpetuate it, p. 192. 4. The Failure to do away with Poverty is not due to the Teachings of the Church, p. 196.

CONCLUSION

Social Questions the Chief Concern of the Century, p. 200. Fifty years of Social Reform, p. 201. Reform on Secular Lines, p. 202.

The Social Question merely Economic and Non-moral, p. 202. Disastrous consequences of the above, p. 204.

Social Reform essentially a Moral Question, p. 205. Social Reform based on Morality but without Religion or Metaphysics, p. 206. The foregoing Theory utterly unacceptable, p. 207. It is unpopular: while the suggested foundations of Evolution and Solidarity have proved failures, p. 209. The Moral Code must be established on the ideas of God and Religion, p. 210. The present Moral Decadence is consequent upon the Weakening of Belief among the People, p. 211. The Masses must be brought back to the Church, p. 214.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

THE SOCIAL VALUE OF THE GOSPEL

CHAPTER I

THE OBJECT OF THIS STUDY

The movement which had already attracted many Catholics to the serious problems of social life has developed considerably since the clear and fruitful intervention of Leo XIII. Encouraged by the present Holy Father, as much as by his predecessor, these Catholics are not merely content to study the burning economic questions of the day; they strive to find a practical solution of them, and endeavour, by every means in their power, to lessen the inequalities existing in the human family. They desire to establish more equity in the ordinary relations of men, especially between employers and employed, and they hope in this manner to secure a greater amount of well-being for the agricultural labourers and the workers in factories,—classes so numerous and so deserving of interest.

These Catholics, whose number is daily increasing, are perfectly aware that an economic

and social reform is coming, and that nothing will be able to stop it. On the other hand, to the materialistic reform proclaimed by the apostles of modern socialism, they mean to oppose a Christian reform, which will respect all rights, will be able to satisfy all the lawful aspirations of the working classes, and will draw its leading principles from the teachings of Christ. They do not hesitate to affirm that this is possible, and that every attempt inspired by other ideas than those of the Gospel is certain to fail. Such attempts may destroy, but they will be powerless to rebuild. Very many Catholics, then, not only look upon religion as a great social force, but desire to introduce it into the organization of the economic life of the present day.

On every side we hear of the Social Gospel, of Social Catholicism. These names are continually repeated, although, as yet, they have an unpleasant sound in the ears of many excellent people "who look on the epithet *social* as narrowing the ancient and broad meaning of the word Catholicism, and who would like to regard social Catholicism as a fashion apart, a fashion too novel and too modern to be Catholic."[1]

Can the offending word be explained and authorized? Does the Gospel—that is, the whole teaching of Christ—contain a real social doctrine, and is there in the Church a social tradition

[1] George Goyau: *Autour du Catholicisme social*, 2nd series, p. 3.

properly so called? Must the movement we see be looked upon simply as the effort of a very ancient religion to grow young again, and to adapt itself to the present time, or must we believe that "social Catholicism is not a mistake, and that in preaching this so-called new doctrine, it is not proposed to dress up the old faith in a fashionable style, but to revive, according to the needs of the time, all the healthful energy which this old faith contained"?[1]

Christ lived in a world in which there were social relations, ties of friendship, and economic questions. The first act of His ministry was to gather round Him a group of disciples enjoying His intimacy, whose united action was to transmit and perpetuate His teaching. Far from living as a recluse, He mingled with His fellow-countrymen, and took part in the joys and sorrows of human life. Almost every social question existing in His day was submitted to Him in one form or another, as Professor Peabody remarks,[2] either for the purpose of knowing what He thought of it, or of laying a trap for Him, or of confronting Him with a difficulty. He took occasion to explain the inviolability of the family, the relations to be observed between rich and poor, between masters and servants, the responsibilities and duties imposed on their possessors by

1 George Goyau: *Autour du Catholicisme social*, 1st series, p. 42.

2 *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 76.

the goods of this world, and many other problems which belong to every age and country. He gave these explanations by the way, not troubling to link one with another, and without the slightest apparent intention of forming out of them a body of teaching. They are few, buried in the Gospel narrative, and seem to have only incidentally engaged the Master's attention.[1]

By reverently gathering up these fragments, putting them together, explaining one by another as well as by our Lord's actions, is it possible to form a consistent whole, a teaching sufficiently precise and complete to form the basis of a social organization? Are we not misunderstanding the real character of Christ's mission, and mistaking the true bearing of His Gospel, by seeking from them light on the economic difficulties of the present day, and remedies to end the terrible crisis through which society is passing? In a word, is it right to maintain that the teaching of Jesus—and by teaching must be understood the lessons given by His actions as much as by His words—is social as well as religious? Ought this teaching necessarily to inspire every one who tries to bring back to the earth a more just and equitable

[1] For a long time theologians, preachers, and ascetical writers were the only students of the Sacred Scriptures. The critics scrutinized them from a philological, historical, and literary point of view. In these latter years, but only in them, have sociologists begun to interrogate them, trying to find teachings in the New Testament which may help to a just solution of the harassing and complex social question.

state of things, and one more in harmony with the plans of God and the purposes of creation?

The question is full of interest and reality. It is one of those most eagerly discussed of late years; and as the most absolutely contradictory opinions have been propounded on the subject, it will not be without profit, before approaching the foundation of the problem, to say a few words about the discussions which have taken place. Clearness will thereby be gained, and clearness is of sovereign value on a subject in which friends and foes are not always sufficiently on their guard against inaccuracies and generalities.

Our work will, therefore, begin by an exposition of the opinions put forth on this topic by different schools. We shall look next at the part played by Catholics in the study-movement formed to extract from the Gospel those principles of higher sociology contained in it. And, after having pointed out what it would be unreasonable to seek in the social teachings of Christ, we shall present our own view, and show that the Gospel has exercised an enormous influence on the destinies, even the material destinies, of mankind; we shall make it clear that its power is not exhausted, and that now, as ever, it can provide the most valuable helps for bringing into society, so divided and so sick, the reign of order, justice, union, and peace. We shall end by summing-up the Gospel teaching as to the goods of this world.

This is a vast subject, and long explanations

would be needed to deal with it thoroughly; we shall content ourselves with tracing its main lines, recommending special books on the subject to those who wish to study it in detail. We may particularly mention *The Social Teaching of Jesus*, by A. Lugan, and *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, by Francis Peabody. This latter work, though written with great honesty and lofty Christian feeling, needs serious reservations on certain points. Its author is a Protestant professor at Harvard University in the United States.

CHAPTER II

THE OPINIONS OF DIFFERENT SCHOOLS

With regard to the social value of the Gospel, we find three chief schools. To the question: Does the Gospel really contain a social doctrine? the first answers: Christ's teaching was, before everything, a reforming and social teaching. The second says: Christ's teaching was exclusively religious, and throws no light on social problems. The third replies: Christ's teaching was specially a religious teaching, but also a social teaching; it contains all the great principles which ought to regulate the organization of orderly social life.

I. The School maintaining that Christ's Teaching was, before all, Reformatory and Social.

Those who belong to this school generally refuse to look on Jesus of Nazareth as a founder of religion and a propagator of dogma. They recognize in Him no divine character. They consider Him only a highly-gifted man, eminently

good and upright—a reformer who brought back to the world, where they were completely forgotten, the great and noble ideals of brotherhood, justice, liberty, peace, and mutual help.

His efforts tended, before everything, to an economic transformation; His mission was of an essentially human character, and His doctrines were much less theological than social. "Christianity such as He instituted it," they say, "is neither a religious nor an ecclesiastical system, but the revelation of a life. It is no form of worship, but a social ideal to be realized in a community of men who are all aiming at the general good."[1] . . . . "The Sermon on the Mount is the science of society. It is a treatise on political economy. . . The rejection of Christ's social ideal was the crucifixion He carried in His heart. An industrial democracy would be the social actualization of Christianity. It is the logic of the Sermon on the Mount."[2]

"What, then, is the teaching of Jesus, when it is stripped of the theological interpretations which have obscured it, but the gospel of a working man's movement, the language of a social agitator, the historical anticipation of the modern programme of social democracy?"[3]

"Jesus is," says Naumann, "a man of the people;" his talk is "with constant reiteration

1 Nitti, quoted by Peabody, p. 63.
2 Herron: *Social Meanings of Religious Experience*, quoted by Peabody, p. 63.
3 Peabody: *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 57.

of the rich and the poor." "To save men's souls He is the enemy of wealth." "Jesus loves the rich, but He knows that their souls are free only when they are ready to throw their wealth away." He is "on moral grounds a radical enemy of capital." "What are to be the tests of the Last Judgement? Not dogmas or confessions, but one's relation to human need." "An age which does not feed the hungry, care for the naked, and visit the sick and the prisoners belongs in the everlasting fire."[1]

This aspect of Christianity, the only true one, say the members of the school we are considering, has hitherto been too much misunderstood; it will not always be so; an evolution will follow, giving back to the teaching of Jesus its fundamental character.

"The Christianity of yesterday was dogmatic, that of to-morrow will be social. . . The personality of Christ, chiefly looked at dogmatically in the past, will be regarded socially in the future. Having been expressed in creeds, it will be expressed in institutions; after being the monopoly of the Church, it will become the inheritance of humanity."[2] More and more will the work of Jesus be reckoned a humanitarian work.

It sprang from the desire to put an end to injustice, and to solace the misery of the multi-

[1] Pastor Naumann, of Frankfort, quoted by Peabody, op. cit., p. 62.

[2] Wilfrid Monod: *La fin d'un Christianisme*, pp. 74 75.

tude. The Gospel is but one long cry of compassion and of love. The exceeding tenderness of Jesus was touched at the sight of so much iniquity, suffering, oppression, harshness, undeserved misfortune, glaring inequality, and odious abuses. He undertook the task of bringing back a more just and humane order of things, and He spoke a language so much unknown till then, that it might be considered as descended from Heaven.

To the rich He preached renunciation; to the proud, equality; to the selfish, forgetfulness of self and fellowship; to pleasure-seekers, voluntary mortification; to the idle, work; to all, pity, justice, kindness, consideration for the weak, love of one's neighbour, reverence for duty, and altruism in its loftiest and most perfect forms. The Gospel is, before everything, a magnificent social message.

When it is a question of the speedy approach of the "Kingdom of God," these words, they say, must not be taken to mean a distant hereafter, something like the Heaven of present-day Christians. This Kingdom, expected by the Jews and prayed for so ardently for generations, was conceived of by Christ just as by the rest of His race, whose idea of it was purely material and earthly, according to their notion. It was to consist in two things: externally, in the triumph over their enemies and the avenging of their long down-trodden nationality; at home, an age of justice, peace, pros-

perity, and temporal blessings, resulting from a general return to the practice of the law of Jehovah. Such is the expected Kingdom; Christ, so we are told, preached no other, and sought after no other.

After all this it is not astonishing that our social reformers have looked upon Jesus as an ancestor, that they have often revered Him as a master, and that they have recommended to each other some of His teachings as well as His deeds. They have consistently sheltered their systems beneath the standard of the Gospel. It is easy, in fact, "to show the lawfulness of the undeniable movement urging many at the present day (with heroes among them like Tolstoi, and preceded in this by Proudhon) to believe and to say that there is an evident affinity between modern socialism and the doctrine of Christ stripped of the dreadful accretions adopted by the ecclesiastical hierarchy and priestly tyranny; and that after nineteen centuries the one is only the logical and historical renewal, continuation, and expansion of the other."[1]

[1] Edmond Picard: *Le Sermon sur la montagne et Socialisme contemporain*, p. 20.

It is especially in St. Luke, "the Socialistic Apostle," as he is called by certain writers, that our Lord's real idea as to rich and poor is said to be found. It is also found in St. Matthew, but not in the same degree, for there it is often toned down. They make great distinctions among the evangelists, and have even elaborated a system out of them which is in many ways fantastic.

John's Gospel, they say, has no social bearing; there is scarcely any allusion in it to material goods. The author lives in quite another world, one of lofty philosophy. He

If we are to believe Meunier, Cabet, Considérant, and the greater number of the revolutionary writers of 1848, pure socialism is to be found in the Gospel and in primitive Christianity, together with the condemnation of private property and the praise of communism. They contain all the principles on which is based the present war against the well-to-do middle class, employers, and capitalists. "Except when it declares itself atheist," wrote Rodolph Todt, "socialism cannot be condemned in the name of the Gospel, because its theories are in har-

takes pleasure only in describing spiritual realities and divine mysteries. Mark also rapidly passes by the great social problems, desirous above all things to record briefly the words and actions of Christ, whose teachings on the social question must therefore be looked for in the Gospels of Matthew and of Luke.

Very striking differences may, however, be observed in these two Gospels. "There is as great a difference of teaching on this point between Matthew and Luke as between a philanthropic *savant* and a militant socialist in our modern literature." Many teachings and facts relating to the danger of riches are related only by Luke: the history of the rich man and Lazarus, the story of the pounds, the parable of the unjust steward, &c. When Matthew mentions the same episodes and utterances as Luke, we always find the text of the latter more decisive and severe on the rich.

When Matthew says: *Give to them that asketh of thee* (v. 42) Luke writes: *Give to everyone that asketh thee* (vi. 30). *Sell what thou hast*, says Matthew (xix. 21); *Sell all whatever thou hast*, says Luke (xviii. 22). While Matthew in the Beatitudes calls *the poor in spirit blessed* (v. 3), Luke applies this title to the *poor* in general (vi. 20 24), and emphasizes this difference by adding these words: *Woe to you that are rich*. Matthew says: *Lay up to yourselves treasures in Heaven* (vi. 20); Luke goes further: *Sell what you possess and give alms* (xii. 33). It is the same throughout.

mony with the teachings of the New Testament, and contain Gospel truths. . . . Whoever desires to become acquainted with the social question, and to help to solve it, should have works on political economy on his left hand, books on scientific socialism on his right, and his New Testament open in front of him."[1]

Jesus was a socialist; had He lived in our day He would have been the Messias of the new gospel which, in the name of humanity and justice, defends the cause of the poor against the rich, and resents the yoke of capital.

Of all the apostles James is the one who most resembles Luke. He is extremely hard on the rich. "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted: and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered: and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days. Behold the hire of the labourers, who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth: and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have feasted upon earth: and in riotousness you have nourished your hearts, in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and put to death the just one, and he resisted you not."—James v. 1-6.

According to the same school, the teaching of Paul resembles much more that of Matthew than that of Luke. That does not alter the fact that the latter has best understood his Master. Only from him must be sought the true teaching of Christ about the goods of this world.

It is needless to observe that in this theory much must be set aside. The system rests on no scientific basis.

1 *Socialisme contemporain* (Introd. p. xvii.). E. de Laveleye says: "There is a fund of socialism in every Christian who understands the teachings of his Master and takes them seriously. . . Christianity has formulated the principles of socialism in the clearest terms."

This is what is said by those who see in Christ nothing but a reformer. They distort His divine figure and belittle His mission and character until they are unrecognizable. Many remember nothing of His teaching but the anathemas He uttered against the rich, and, resting on the severe words He justly addressed to them, they condemn ownership, of which He blamed only the abuse.[1]

Some go still further. They transform Christ into a revolutionary, and even into a sort of anarchist. "He was," says Renan in his

1 Unbelieving philosophers have expressed themselves in the same way as these revolutionary socialists. From Bayle to Herbert Spencer, all have looked upon Christ as a reformer aiming at the overthrow of established order, and at the substitution of a new state of things. Some, like Tolstoi, have welcomed Him with enthusiasm, respect, and affection; they have hailed Him as a liberator enamoured with justice. Others, like Hobbes, have considered Him a wicked Utopian, a dangerous anarchist, a culpable promoter of social dissolution; they have been extremely severe towards Him personally, and hard upon His work.

Some have even gone further. Affecting to look on the Gospel as merely a revolutionary pamphlet, and on Jesus as a pious enthusiast, they find a reason for rejecting His teaching and for declaring it unacceptable. They say, with an English philosopher of the present day: "If Christianity pretends to impose the Gospel on us as a rule of conduct, then, on such a condition, not one of us is a Christian, and we do not wish to be, for there is not one of our great social institutions which is not ignored or condemned by the New Testament. In fact, it disputes and looks suspiciously on the right to property, it breaks family ties, to the effect that national life and patriotism become impossible. The moral code of the first Christians took no account of home, nor of sex, nor of one's native land. Too long have we professed an unrealizable belief, which, were it seriously put in practice, would be as immoral as it is chimerical."

notorious *Life of Jesus,* "an anarchist in certain respects, for He did not admit the civil power, but considered it an abuse. His doctrine was pure Ebionism, that is to say, a belief, according to which only the poor *(ebionite)*[1] could be saved. He forgave the rich man, but only when the latter had been ill-treated and cast out by the society to which he belonged; He had a marked predilection for persons of doubtful reputation; His conception of the world was socialism tinged with a Galilean spirit. His dream was of a vast social revolution, mingling all ranks and suppressing every kind of authority."

From the beginning, it is said, His disciples attacked the institutions of the Greek and Roman world, and strove to overthrow them. Saint Paul—we quote Renan—was a kind of "French travelling-companion who went from town to town, planting in men's hearts, together with the Gospel, a contempt for the social and economic order of the time."

It has even been pretended that out of elements borrowed from the New Testament it would be easy to compose the manual of the perfect revolutionary socialist. When Jesus, we are told, cast the swine into the sea, it was with the purpose of showing His complete indifference to private ownership; when He fed the multitudes, it was to show that economic problems are

[1] Ebionite, or Ebionæan, is a word of Aramæan origin, meaning a poor man.

superior to those of a spiritual order; when He chastised the money-changers in the Temple, it was in order to bear public testimony against capitalism and the iniquities it causes. "He was a great revolutionary; if anyone preached nowadays as He used to do, he would be arrested on the spot."[1]

It is almost unnecessary to remark that all this is

1 Those who wish to see in Jesus nothing but a social reformer look only at one aspect—and that the least important—of His personality and His mission. They see only His pity for the unfortunate, His compassion for all who suffer and are despised, His antipathy to the proud, His reproaches to bad rich men. In place of the traditional Christ, they put one entirely human, a friend of the mean and vulgar, and mean and vulgar himself. "Christ," they say, in the words of a German workman, "was a true friend of the working-class, not only in words, like many who came after Him, but also in deeds. He was hated and persecuted as socialists are to-day, and had He lived in our time, He would doubtless have been one of us. . . We had hitherto believed that Christ was an invention of the priests; but now we recognize Him as a man almost like ourselves, a poor workman who loved the poor, and having understood this, we know Him as our friend and forerunner."

In His teaching they find an authorization for their attacks upon capital, and an encouragement to carry on unceasingly the war they have undertaken to make popular demands prevail. Instead of a mystic Jesus sitting in another world on the right hand of His Father, they wish to see in Him only the carpenter of Nazareth, the advocate of the poor, the sympathetic and tender-hearted reformer who has laboured to soften the hard lot of His companions in misery and toil. They altogether deny His divine character, but allow that He had a great moral superiority, and pronounce Him one of the most remarkable benefactors of humanity.

Renan, in his *Life of Jesus*, was the first to try to establish a link of relationship between "the Galilean reformer and the modern agitator, the declared enemy of law and of capital."

fancy and not history. Such a Christ has nothing in common with the real Christ. Jesus was neither a demagogue nor a revolutionary. He was neither a forerunner of our modern socialists, nor simply a redresser of wrongs, nor a mere preacher of active charity and human brotherhood. He was not merely a beneficent genius; He was God, and His mission, divine like His person, consisted before everything in giving to the world a new religion, a religion of justice and of love, of abnegation and of devotedness. The practice of His religion would ensure respect for all rights, and would do away with some of the social iniquities which disgraced ancient civilizations.

This school, which affects to see only a reformer in Christ, and in His Gospel only a superior system of morality, is composed of two elements. It comprises a certain number of rationalists, and a host of Protestants, especially Germans, who follow Dr. Stoecker and are "Social Christians."[1]

[1] There are two kinds of socialists. Those of 1830 and 1848, the founders of socialism, generally profess great respect for the person of Christ, and a high esteem for His doctrine. They look on Him as a precursor, and willingly commend His teachings to their associates. Modern socialists, especially those who follow in the wake of the Jews, Lassalle, Engels, and Karl Marx, affect either to ignore Him, or not to take Him seriously. They wish to look on Him simply as a dreamer, as one of those idealists of whom the East has produced so many. His work is of no importance and His teaching of no social value.

The same points of view, and the same differences of appreciation, exist among rationalists. At the present

II. The School asserting that Christ's Teaching was exclusively Religious, and that it throws no light on Social Problems.

In contrast with the foregoing school arises another, which advocates a doctrine diametrically opposite. According to this party: "The supreme concern of Jesus throughout His ministry was—it may be unhesitatingly asserted—not the re-organization of human society, but the disclosure to the human soul of its relation to God. Jesus was, first of all, not a reformer, but a revealer; He was not primarily an agitator with a plan, but an idealist with a vision. His mission was religious. His central desire was to make plain to human souls the relation in which they stand to their Heavenly Father."[1]

Nothing is more opposed to good sense than

day, the opinion of the greater number is that the Gospel is clearly unsocial; some go so far as to pronounce it frankly anti-social.

German Protestants are divided into three parties: The *orthodox* or *traditionalists*, who maintain that Christianity is essentially an individualist religion, and that the Gospel takes absolutely no account of social and economic questions; the *Social-Christians*, who are inclined to see in the Gospel a social message at least as much as a religious one; these belong to Stoecker's school; the *Social-Nationals*, who, with Pastor Naumann, limit the whole social value of the Gospel to its having contributed more than anything else to the creation of a medium favourable to the development of social ideas and institutions. They are nearer to the orthodox than to the Social-Christians. They wish to re-act against the tendencies of the latter. —The essentially individualist character of the Protestant religion logically leads those professing it to deny all social import to Christianity.

[1] Peabody: *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 77.

"to transform Jesus Christ into a kind of philanthropic and socialistic reformer. He desired but one sort of reform: the betterment of souls. The only society He had in view was that of Heaven, which He looked upon as the subversion of that of earth."[1]

He has no care for things here below, and does not wish His followers to trouble about them any more than He does Himself. Their whole attention ought to be concentrated on their sanctification and salvation; the rest is nothing. "What doth it profit a man," He repeats to them, "if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?"[2] "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."[3] Perfection consists in the most complete renouncement: "Go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come, follow Me."[4]

When Christ speaks of the "Kingdom of God," it is not of an earthly kingdom, such as the Jews were expecting, but solely of a Heavenly Kingdom—of that which, from the beginning, was prepared for the blessed of His Father. To maintain the contrary, one must be profoundly ignorant or absolutely dishonest.

The interests of the hereafter are the only ones which really occupy Him; they absorb Him to

1 Paul Janet: *Histoire de la science politique*, I., p. 287.

2 Matt. xvi. 26—Mark viii. 36—Luke ix. 25.

3 Matt. vi. 33—Luke xii. 31.

4 Matt. xix. 21.

such a degree as to leave Him no leisure to think of those of this life. The thought of the Four Last Things dominates, sums up, and governs all His teaching. This doctrine "is only for the purified man, the anchorite, the saint. Nothing can be learnt from it about what ought to be done in modern civil society. . . . When a theologian takes up economics he is forced to borrow his teaching from lay schools, from secular considerations as to the law of nature, or else he speaks like a dreamer."[1]

It is impossible to imagine doctrine more *unsocial* than that of Jesus. He is always above the realities of the present life, and detaches Himself from earthly happenings to the extent of seeming to ignore them. Even when He enjoins eminently social virtues, such as justice, mutual help, reciprocal support, fraternal and active charity, it is not as social that He recommends them, but as being suitable for perfecting the moral being and for increasing the merits of the soul.

He was undeniably very kind to all; by preference He exercised His ministry among the poor; His preaching pressed hard upon the rich; He vigorously condemned injustice and iniquity. He went about everywhere exhorting men to good, and doing it everywhere; a more merciful heart and a more compassionate soul cannot be imagined; but despite all that, it cannot seriously

[1] G. Sorel: *La ruine du monde antique*, p. 270.

be maintained that the movement He set on foot was a social movement, having for its starting-point the spectacle of the material misery existing at the time and in the environment in which He lived.

He was certainly not indifferent to these miseries, but He never considered Himself sent to cure them, nor did He seriously busy Himself with improvements of a purely economic order which might be introduced into the world. He had nobler cares, and held quite other ideas as to His mission. Besides, His doctrinal system itself led Him to attach but an insignificant importance to anything that was wholly terrestrial.

"Nothing is easier than to determine historically the attitude of Jesus towards the world, towards earthly possessions, towards human law, towards civilization. The vision of the approaching Kingdom must have inspired Him with a kind of disdain for all these things, and the texts leave no possible doubt as to His sentiments. But just as means have been found to bring back upon Himself and the present the regard that the Saviour directed towards the future, success is equally looked for, if not in showing Him as positively interested in present life, social questions, political order, human progress, at least in attenuating His indifference towards them all. . .

"The historical truth is that the idea of a society regularly constituted according to the

principles of the Gospel does not exist apart from the vision of the approaching Kingdom, where there shall be neither rich nor poor, where there shall be no question of private property or collective property, and where divine happiness is the common possession of all. . . .

"The Gospel contains no formal declaration for or against the constitution of human society in the world as it is . . . the Gospel has rather regarded human law and political and social economy as abstractions; and further, it had no formal intention of regenerating them, unless by the radical transformation implied in the ideal of the Kingdom."[1]

Such is the view adopted by those who, up to a certain point, may be described as the moderate section in the school of which we are speaking. Its advanced members are not content to maintain that the teaching of Christ was *unsocial*, they declare it to have been *anti-social*. Zola writes: "It is an anti-social, anti-human doctrine; a deadly doctrine, suppressing life, and this world, for the sake of a super-earthly existence—a deceitful bait by means of which a too tangible sovereignty is aimed at."[2]

He breaks every social bond, He saps the foundations of the family, He wishes the most honourable and sacred affections to be stifled, He

[1] Loisy: *The Gospel and the Church*, pp. 23, 29, 32, 33.
[2] *Revue Blanche: Enquête sur la liberté d'enseignement*. 1902.

takes no account of the heart's most lawful needs, but demands a renunciation of all possessions, an abdication of one's whole being—a thing contrary to nature. He says: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. . . Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth cannot be My disciple. . . Think ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you no, but separation. For there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided; three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against his father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."[1]

Spurious virtues are continually recommended in the Gospel, than which nothing less social can be conceived,—weakness, self-depreciation, distrust of personal strength, contempt for material interests, indifference to all human progress, disdain for action. Christ encourages inactivity, and instead of urging man to work, He leads him to a mystic and lazy quietude.

To those who might be tempted "to sow, to reap, and gather into barns;" that is to say, to do some really useful and fruitful work, and

[1] Luke xiv. 26, 33—xii. 51, 52, 53.

therefore a really social work, He says, in exquisitely poetical words: "Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the meat: and the body more than the raiment? Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns: and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And which of you by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. And if the grass of the field, which is to-day, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe: how much more you, O ye of little faith? Be not solicitous therefore, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all those things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye, therefore, first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not, therefore, solicitous for to-morrow, for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."[1]

It forbids, or discourages, not only an uneasy

[1] Matt. vi. 25-34.

solicitude, an exaggerated anxiety for material wants; it tends to divert men from trying to provide for them by themselves. Under pretext of inspiring great confidence in God, it leads us to refer wholly to Him the care of procuring our subsistence, and of providing for our various needs. It suffices to seek here below the Kingdom of God, all the rest will be added. The Father, who feeds the birds of the air and clothes the lilies of the field, will not let us want food and raiment. Why trouble, therefore, about the morrow? Why toil and save? To-morrow will suffice for itself, for "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." It is the consecration of idleness, thoughtlessness, and uselessness.

Is it possible, they say, to turn more away from work, from initiative, from forethought, from a just care for the necessities of life, and to preach a more anti-social doctrine? As has been well observed, it is only for contemplatives and anchorites; it answers to none of the needs of our present existence, it is only good for making men unsuccessful in business *(infructuosi in negotiis)*, as the early Christians used to be called by their contemporaries."[1]

It is also the consecration of cowardice and weakness. Christ wishes His disciples to suffer themselves to be beaten and robbed. He commands: "To him that striketh thee on the one cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh

[1] Cf. Tertullian: *Apology*, c. 42, M., p. 554.

away from thee thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also."[1]

Strong characters are not made by such teachings; they make only puny beings without initiative and without manliness—half-formed men who, under pretence of aiming at a vague interior perfection, cease to interest themselves in the affairs of ordinary life, and at last become incapable of fulfilling the duties incumbent on every member of human society.

Without going as far as the old orthodox Protestants and the rationalists, whose theories have just been described, certain Catholic commentators have put forward opinions limiting the social value of the Gospel to the point of almost entirely suppressing it. They, too, consider it proved that Christ had in view the Kingdom of God exclusively; that is, the glory of the Father and the salvation of men. Moral improvement was the one object of His thoughts, His teaching, and His example.

They say that throughout the whole course of His life, He subjected Himself to the ordinary conditions of human existence as they were in His day and in His country. He accommodated Himself to the laws, customs, habits, ways of acting, to all He saw in the political, economic, and social sphere. Not one word of His can be quoted which points to a material improvement to be introduced, or to a change to be made in

1 Luke vi. 29.

the usual way of acting. He came to fulfil a mission of a higher order, He takes no interest in these matters, He leaves them to simple mortals, recommending His disciples not to fix their heart on them, and not to allow them to clog their minds.

"It must be concluded," they add, "that the Gospel has no special rules of which man can make use in the exercise of his natural activity. In its own domain this activity takes notice only of the moral law which is imposed on every reasonable will, and of the rules suitable to the various forms such activity may assume. There is no evangelical commerce and industry; there are only merchants and workmen who live in conformity with the maxims of the Gospel. There is no evangelical social science and political economy. Le Play has rightly based all social organization on the observance of the Decalogue. As to the strictly evangelical principles of the distribution of wealth and the social life, they are mere counsels, only applicable in very special cases, and which have been put in practice by the religious orders. But social questions do not find their solution in the Gospel. Justice and charity, which must necessarily inspire this solution, are already commanded by the natural law; the Gospel has only insisted more emphatically on this double obligation, and has reminded all mankind of it. Thenceforth it belongs to the genius

of man to organize society to the best of his knowledge."[1]

III. The Intermediate School.

Between the two extreme schools, one of which recognizes in the Gospel a purely social import while the other allows it an exclusively religious value, there exists a third, which endeavours to keep at an equal distance from the exaggerations of both and to place the facts in their true light. It holds that Christ's mission was essentially, and before all else, of a spiritual order. He came to found a religion, to establish a Church, to preach salvation, and to lead souls to Heaven. It was chiefly to this end that He directed all His efforts and devoted the time of His apostolate. He applied Himself to the work of revealing His Father. He made Him known and loved by men. He reminded them that they were destined for a super-terrestrial end, to which everything ought to be subordinated. He taught them that this life's purpose should be pursued by faith and good works. He insisted that their great, and indeed their only business, was to attain it. He pointed out the means of securing it, which He urged them to make use of.

He was a reformer, but above all, a religious reformer. He introduced into the world dogmas and a code of morality hitherto unknown. His

[1] H. Lesêtre : *Revue d'Apologétique*, Nov. 1st, 1905, p. 121-2.

purpose in so doing was, in the first place, the interior improvement of individuals, their spiritual development, the higher good of their souls.

It would, however, be a grave mistake to suppose that He took no interest in anything else; in those things, namely, not immediately connected with the Kingdom of God in the heart.

Having come to perfect man, He took the *whole* man and placed him in the setting assigned to him by Providence. Consequently, He took him with his body, his social destiny, his numerous wants, his duties of every kind, and in his necessary relations. The Kingdom of Heaven did not cause Him to lose sight completely of the kingdom of earth, as some have unjustly reproached Him for doing. He had a care for this kingdom here below, for He knew, better than anyone, that it is the road by which we must travel to reach the Kingdom above.

The material aspects of existence, while of very secondary importance in His eyes, were not a matter of indifference to Him. He did not discourage those who took an active interest in them; He only asked them to do so with moderation, and to subordinate their efforts to the order established by God. He did not condemn wealth, He simply denounced its misuse. He did not forbid temporal possessions, but He taught how they were to be used.

The work and the intention of Christ are therefore completely misunderstood when it is pretended

that, entirely absorbed in theological cares, He took no interest in anything else, and gave to His religion a "character essentially ethereal and individualistic."

He did not separate man from his surroundings; He deeply influenced the latter by transforming the former; His action was felt beneficently throughout all the relations of life. He reminded men of their duties to each other, not less than of those to their common Father. His moral code has a distinctly social stamp. The social value of the Gospel is indisputable; from this point of view, as well as from that of religion, His influence has been enormous.

Laboulaye could say with perfect truth: "If Jesus Christ had not come on the earth, I know not how the world would have resisted the despotism which was stifling it. I am not now speaking as a Christian. I leave all religious questions on one side, and speak only as an historian. In this capacity, I affirm that in politics and in social economy, as well as in morality and philosophy, the Gospel renewed the souls of men. It is with reason that we date from the new era, for a new society came forth from the Gospel."

Among those who, believers or unbelievers, recognize in the Gospel, apart from its religious import, an incontestable social value, two distinct and almost opposite parties have been formed: the Conservative party and the Progressive party.

1. Some *Conservatives* incline to the view that here below everything is for the best in the best of worlds. They seem to find in the Gospel the elements of a treatise on political economy which is very quiet, very respectable, and quite in their style and to their taste. They claim to be able to extract from Christ's teachings and examples the consecration of all their social principles. They see in them an anticipatory disavowal of the reforming theories of our modern democrats, and a condemnation, two thousand years in advance, of a labour movement which threatens to overthrow institutions which form "the highest safeguard of order, of ownership, of law, and of liberty." With a little pressure, they would affirm that the formula "let be, let pass,"[1] is to be found in the Gospel, if not in the exact words, at least equivalently.

In their opinion, Christ thought and acted socially just as they do. He is one of them, and they have the right to look on Him as the greatest glory of their school. He did not flatter the masses under pretence of proving His sympathy and interest; He did not plant in their minds numerous germs of chimerical hopes; He did not preach to the working classes coalitions, strikes, revolts, claims, social transformations, economic revolutions; He did not fill the ears of the multitude with the high-sounding names of unrecognized rights, hateful injustices, or long-

[1] *Laissez faire, laissez passer.*

standing abuses. On the contrary, He always recommended to the poor and the "disinherited," patience, submission, a resigned acceptance of their lot, promising them in Heaven ample compensation for all the sorrows, privations, and injustices of earth. He was the first to whisper to those who work and suffer, that divine song whose sweet words have soothed the misery and lulled the pain of so many generations of the unfortunate.

He attacked no authority and no institution. The social organization of His day had many points of which He could not but disapprove; nevertheless, He always forbade violent criticism or seditious language. In every circumstance He preached respect for established order, and He did so as much by His example as by word. The crowds who followed Him wished to make Him a king; it would have been easy to put Himself at the head of the Jewish democracy and lead it to the attack of institutions from which it was cruelly suffering; He did not wish to do so, because He came to bring peace, and not revolution.

He contented Himself with repeating to those around Him: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. . . Love one another. . . As you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner. . . Love God above all things, and your neighbour as yourself. . . "

And He Himself was kind, compassionate, charitable, devoted to all, especially to the little ones, the weak, and the unfortunate. That was His method of solving the social question, and it is worth all the others.

If He addressed severe words to the rich, it was not to the rich in general, but to the wicked rich, to those who did not use their fortune aright. The social doctrine of Christ is eminently conservative; it accommodates itself, without complaint or resistance, to the difficulties of life and the hardships of one's lot.

2. The *Progressives*, who manifest a less unreserved admiration for established institutions, find in the Gospel the condemnation of much of our social organization, and are of opinion that Christ had other comfort for the distressed than Platonic counsels of resignation. His teachings contain wonderful principles of reform and progress. Interested partisans of the *status quo* do not understand them. Of these Harnack writes: "Many among us make Him out to be a conservative of our own type, because He respected as the law of God all the social classes and distinctions then existing."

Certainly He did not act as a demagogue and revolutionary. He did not preach class war, nor excite the poor against the rich. It is quite impossible to imagine a reformer more prudent, moderate, wise, or one more opposed to all precipitation and violence. But this reformer

laid down principles which, without any shock, and for the greater good of mankind, revolutionized the ancient world. These principles, during the course of centuries, have lost none of their divine power; they are for all time and all places; they allow the satisfaction of every lawful claim put forward by the masses of to-day; and it is by adhering to them, and to them alone, that, without heaping up ruins, the new social evolution can be worked out, the premonitory signs of which are already visible.

The social ideal obtained from the Gospel is very unlike the cold, selfish ideal of classic conservativism. There is a gulf between the two. They start from different points, and aim at different objects. To deny this, one must be prejudiced, blind, or dishonest. A spirit of reform and of life animates the Gospel, which is the very opposite of conservativism.

Conservativism has much regard for existing conditions, and is prompt with the plea of extenuating circumstances in case of abuses. The Gospel recognizes only what is right, and pursues every just improvement without being stopped by any consideration of policy, interest, or persons. On one side we have continuous movement and progress; on the other, immobility, stagnation, and death. Social conservatives cannot seriously appeal to the teachings of Christ: if they study them honestly they will find, instead of a consecration of their principles, the condem-

nation of their spirit, and disapproval of many of their practices.[1]

We will now proceed to inquire what view we should adopt ourselves. But before doing so it will be advantageous to consider briefly the part played by Catholics in the endeavour to learn from the Gospel those principles of higher sociology which it contains.

1 "The name Conservative," said Mgr. d'Hulst in his Conferences at Notre Dame, "is venerable on one condition: that justice and the rule of goodness be put in the first rank of things that are to be preserved. Alas! there are not a few who see in social defence nothing but a war of interests. Let them not any longer be called conservative; we must call them the 'satisfied.'" (Lent, 1895, 6th Conf.) Such conservatives cannot seriously claim the support of Christ and the Gospel. They misunderstand its spirit, they violate its precepts, and are as little Christian as can be imagined.

CHAPTER III

CATHOLICS AND THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF THE GOSPEL

It is an extraordinary fact, as Peabody remarks, that in a century like ours, when Christians are invited to take an interest in social questions, so little systematic and scientific study should have been given to the social teaching of Christ. For a long time people occupied themselves exclusively with the religious and supernatural side of His mission. Forgetting the example of the Fathers of the Church, and of the great theologians of the Middle Ages, they seemed to have no idea that the Gospel could be approached from any point of view but that of the theologian or the commentator.

In the eyes of a great many, to whom Jesus Christ bears an absolutely superhuman aspect and is outside all the conditions of this life, it would have seemed like impiety to suggest that He lowered Himself so far as to take notice of the trivial problems of earth. They would have thought they were belittling Him by ascribing to Him cares of any but an entirely spiritual

order, and of failing in respect to Him by any attempt to inquire into His social ideas.

Some years ago a reaction set in, and it is no longer thought irreverent or useless to question the Gospel on subjects relating to the progress of earthly things. The social aspect of the teachings of Christ has been frankly discussed, and in this too long neglected field studies have been pursued which, far from lessening the divine greatness of Jesus, have rendered His blessed personality still more attractive.

It must be admitted that Catholics did not take the initiative in these studies. In this matter we were preceded by Protestants, although their interest in the social question was aroused long after ours. In England, America, and Germany they have already an extensive literature on the subject, while we possess scarcely any really important works.[1] We are late in the movement, still we are in it at last.

A school has been formed amongst us which proposes to itself the task of studying the Gospel, no longer from a merely theological or exegetical point of view, but above all from that of the sociologist. It has set itself to bring out into

[1] Among the Protestants who have studied the Gospel from a social point of view may be named, in Germany: Rodolph Todt, Stoecker, Naumann, Ulhorn, Feddersen, Harnack; in England: Hugh Price Hughes; in America: Peabody, Herron; at Geneva: Appia; in France: Roberty, Wilfrid Monod, Reville, A. Quiébreux, P. Minault, Ch. Wagner, E. Ménégoz, H. Jonte, F. Poulain, etc.

the light this fascinating aspect of the New Testament which, for three centuries, has been left almost entirely in the background. It has not been slow to perceive that this Divine Book contains valuable teaching for the orderly working of society as well as for the wise direction of individual life. It has endeavoured to codify the principles extracted, and declares itself able to build on this foundation a Christian social order that shall meet all reasonable demands and satisfy the lawful aspirations of the workers.

"The generations of to-day," as M. Lugan observes, "appear to have left the super-terrestrial heights to which their fathers had withdrawn. Strongly and wisely urged on by Popes, and by events, they have stooped to the sick man, modern society. They have studied and found out his precise condition. This contact with reality has given them light, *i.e.*, wisdom; and, while preserving the necessary integrity of principles, they have come down from the inaccessible heights of abstraction to the domain of actual life. . . More and more clearly do they see that the Gospel gives us, in addition to personal religion and morality, teachings containing the leaven of perfection and progress for our societies."[1]

Congresses have been held, articles written, books published, campaigns conducted, and, thanks to all these, we can now put aside a notion as false as it is old, "that the Book which has

[1] *L'Enseignement social de Jésus*, p. 106.

handed down to us the thoughts and actions of Jesus, contains only dogmas and a code of morality intended solely for the personal salvation and enfranchisement of the soul." It is allowed by every one who has taken the trouble to follow this movement without bias, that the Gospel offers abundant light and invaluable guidance in social relations.

The school of which we speak, in spite of the initial imprudences and exaggerations of some of its adherents, is daily gaining ground. It progresses slowly but steadily. It carries the younger generation with it, it has received warm encouragement from bishops and the Pope, and it claims to represent the true Catholic tradition. Nevertheless, it is far from having overcome the mistrust and opposition of its early days. Many Catholics are still prejudiced, looking on it as undertaking a dangerous task, and they reproach it with spreading principles as imprudent as they are unfounded. With a real or feigned apprehension they watch it plunging headlong in the course it has taken. They do not believe in the social Gospel, having only sought from the Gospel lights for their own conscience, declaring religion to be a purely personal and private matter.

They erect a water-tight partition between religion and all that concerns politics, sociology, commerce, and economics. All these spring from human initiative, and not from morality or religion.

Some through fear of seeing religion compromised by stooping to the details of everyday life, others dreading lest it should set foot on ground outside its own sphere of influence, others, again, from different motives, ask for it to be relegated "to the shadow of the sanctuary, and the secrecy of the heart;" they would also like to see the clergy sent back "to their confessional and their sacristy."

Such a doctrine cannot be too strongly opposed. It rests on most dangerous principles, and leads to the most objectionable results. It comes into line with the worst kind of liberalism, and it is surprising that men who consider themselves sincere Catholics are not afraid to support it.

It is false to say that religion is a purely private matter, that its sphere of action does not extend beyond the domain of conscience, and that, although bound to direct our interior life by its teaching, we are free to arrange our public life without the least regard for its precepts, and to behave, in politics, in economics, or in sociology, as if it did not exist.

Such ideas, and the pretence of "rendering to God the things that are God's and to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," have brought about the secularization of the State, society, laws, institutions, teaching, public assistance; religious indifference has become an axiom of government; and this secularization of all public services is represented as the natural end to be reached

when old prejudices have been laid aside, and old habits broken with.

It is no more lawful to withdraw ourselves from the influence of the Gospel in our public than in our private life. A man cannot cut himself in two. And without any desire to confuse religion with worldly concerns, or to subject to ecclesiastical authority matters which are outside its province, we must recognise that he alone is the true Christian who does not imprison his faith in the secrecy of his conscience, but makes it the mainspring of his actions both as a citizen and as an individual.

A great mistake and a serious fault have been committed by breaking with the oldest traditions of the Church, and by ceasing to carry the Gospel into the world where politics and sociology exercise their activities. For this reason the world has escaped us, and present-day society has been profoundly secularized. It has become not only secular, but anti-Christian and atheist. To this criminal work those amongst us have largely contributed who, imbued with Regalism and Gallicanism, have desired to shut up Christianity in the churches.

Under pretence of resisting clerical encroachments, and of safeguarding the rights of civil society, they have made an unnatural divorce between religion and society, such as is likely to cause the death of the latter. They have forgotten, as Professor Herron very well puts it in his *Social*

Christianity, that "no kind of atheism is so productive of terrible consequences, so insulting to God, so anarchical in its intent, as the attempt to raise a barrier between Christian life and the domain of earthly affairs. . . The idea that the union of religion and politics can only be disastrous is as foolish as that which repudiates as fatal the union of man with his Creator." It is to be regretted that Protestants should have to remind us of these truths.

Society has no more right than individuals to shake off the salutary yoke of the Gospel, and to withdraw from its beneficent influence. The Gospel was made for nations as much as for private persons. And only by a complete ignoring of facts can it be said that the things of social life are of an essentially non-religious and non-moral order. "It is the opinion of some, which is caught up by the masses," writes Leo XIII. in his Encyclical *Graves de communi*, "that 'the social question,' as they call it, is merely 'economic.' The precise opposite is the truth, that it is first of all moral and religious, and for that reason its solution is to be expected mainly from the moral law and the pronouncements of religion."[1]

No one dreams of disputing the fact that in social, and especially in political, economy, there are questions essentially abstract which have nothing, or but very little, to do with morality

[1] See *The Pope and the People*, p. 274. C.T.S.

and religion; but what must be denied is that the social question, as a whole, is altogether independent of religion and of morality.

The problems involved in it are too intimately bound up with the realities of existence; they exercise too great an influence on the good or bad direction of human life, they weigh too heavily on peace and public order, to be reasonably considered as purely speculative, and to be likened to mere problems in algebra or trigonometry.

There are still too many, however, at the present day, who refuse to see this, and modern Catholics, for the most part, may apply to themselves what Price Hughes wrote about himself and his co-religionists: "We have dealt too exclusively with the individual aspect of the Christian faith. We have constantly acted as if Christianity had nothing to do with business, with pleasure, and with politics; as if it were simply a question of private life and of prayer meetings. It is because the spirit of Christ has not been introduced into public life that Europe is in a perilous condition to-day. . . We believe Christianity is for this world as well as for the world to come."[1]

To sum up. Some Catholics during the last few years have plunged into the study and application of social Catholicism without taking sufficient care to define and explain its teachings.

[1] Hugh Price Hughes: *Social Christianity*, pp. 21-39.

Others, generally with good intentions, have failed in an opposite direction, and have absolutely denied that the social question belongs to the moral order. Still less do they allow it a religious character. With scarce concealed satisfaction they have taken occasion from the imprudence and exaggeration of the advanced leaders in the Christian-democratic movement to attack unjustly, and sometimes violently, all who claim to take up the social question in the name of the Gospel and Catholic tradition. They treat them as dangerous Utopians, accuse them of compromising Catholicism and religion, and call down anathemas upon them.[1]

They profess to regard as belonging to the "hopeless" members of the party the bulk of

1 "Mgr. Ireland, in September, 1899, in a *Lettre à un ami de France*, published in the *Univers* of September 21st, 1899, distinguished three classes of mind among Catholics. He especially praised those who seek out ways most suitable to circumstances, and methods most in harmony with the prevailing dispositions of mind and heart for developing the action of the Church, and for ensuring the spread of her influence; it was thus he defined 'Christian democracy.' Then, in addition to these and outside these, he distinguished 'those who, impressed by the greatness of the past, aim at reviving its methods and forms without sufficiently taking into account the constantly changing conditions of real life'—and those who 'think their whole duty fulfilled when they have made profession of personal faith and performed an act of piety, or a work of beneficence.'—May these two last types of minds (the first of which are wrong in wrapping themselves up in thoughts of the past, and the second, in greater number, are guilty, perhaps, of the graver fault of not thinking at all) allow their eyes to be opened by the Encyclical *Graves de communi*. May the oligarchy which would like to bury religion in the

that wisely progressive school which, inspired by the Gospel and by the ancient example of the Church, aims at restoring to Christ His place in society, as well as in the bosom of the family and in the individual heart. It professes the most absolute submission to the Holy See, and means to preserve the purest spirit of Catholicism. In face of the social problem lowering so threateningly before us, of the irresistible onrush of the democratic movement, of the formidable upheaval of the fourth estate, of the increasing definiteness of the claims of Labour and its growing organization, it has not been satisfied to shut its eyes in order not to see; it has sought light and remedies from the teachings of Him who has the words of life for this world as well as for the next.[1]

past, and the numerous Catholics who, with extreme caution, wish to imprison it in the individual soul, understand that we are all called, as Christians and as citizens of the 20th century, to spread Christianity throughout the society of our day, and to impregnate with it the tissue of our social relations."—G. Goyau: *Autour du Catholicisme social*, 2nd series, p. 21.

[1] This school may claim the patronage of Leo XIII. It does nothing apart from his initiative and direction. In truth "that which will stamp in history the pontificate of this great Pope is the fulness, sureness, boldness with which he defined for mankind the social consequences of the Christian revelation. Some unbelievers stopped short, amazed and touched: some of the faithful, alas! drew back. To many Catholicism appeared in a new light. Its old teaching, thus fully developed, spoke of earth while speaking of Heaven. It entered into the relations of man with man. While putting souls into their right position towards God, it did not take them out of their bodily frame, nor out of the civil and

Without any sufficient ground, it has been accused of innovation and of launching the Church upon a course which may be fatal to it. If there be any innovation, it is not on the side of this school, but on that of its enemies, who, "by their hostility to the social consequences of Catholicism, and to the social exigencies of Christian morality, follow a fashion too novel and too modern to be Catholic. Their Catholicism,

economic society in which they are responsible agents. It refused to separate God from the social environment, the priest from human needs, or the faithful from the ordinary duties of men. And, with echoes of Sinai and of the Sermon on the Mount, it invited all, believers and unbelievers alike, to put their trust in these healing words, and to enforce them by their endeavours in the cause of justice.

"A sort of quietism had begun to surround and cloud the minds of good people, and this quietism, a mixture of ignorance, indifference, and selfishness, was too often leading them to take no interest in the social body. They might be seen bestowing their alms, as in trustful hope, and tentatively, on certain cases of misery. But the misery remained, a social phenomenon, obstinate, and discouraging. It would seem, in the opinion of such Christians, as if Christ had not foreseen nor heeded this phenomenon, and that Christianity had no arms with which to combat it. But the old teacher spoke more loudly; it spoke very loudly; it claimed its right to judge and then to regulate those economic and social relations, which are the cause of so much wretchedness in our modern world. It proved, besides, that a human being, reduced to a certain degree of destitution, becomes an almost inevitable prey to moral evil; that one failure involves another; and that there are men who must first be restored to self-respect before, not faith only, but even virtue, can be effectually preached to them. In this simple attestation the old doctrine condemned the apathy of the new quietism, and came forth to rescue morality from peril, and at the same time to vindicate injured rights."—G. Goyau: op. cit., 3rd series, pp. 32, 33.

sincere as it may be in the inner conscience, edifying as it may become by the individual fervour of their souls, is a Catholicism bearing a stamp and a date : it bears the date and stamp of a period silenced by secularism. It comes of a time when Christ was allowed to reign, if it so pleased Him, in the interior consciences, but not to unite consciences, when working in public life, by the bond of His universal and sovereign supremacy."[1]

Those whom they accuse of perverting ancient Catholicism have only strengthened the chain which connects the Catholicism of to-day with the great theologians of the Middle Ages, and with the most illustrious Fathers of the early Church. "If Christianity and Catholicism are nowadays called social, it is not because they have not always been so, nor must it be supposed for an instant that they could cease to be so without at the same time ceasing to be Christianity and Catholicism. As there is a time to be silent and a time to speak, so is there a time to develop with greater fulness such or such a portion of permanent teaching. Catholic action has always been, and ever will be, social. It is more evidently and continuously social when exercised, as in our days, at a period of social revolution."[2]

1 G. Goyau : op. cit., 2nd series, p. 3.

2 Brunetière : *Conférence sur les raisons actuelles de croire,* delivered at Tours, Feb. 23rd, 1901.

CHAPTER IV

WHAT IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF THE GOSPEL

In dealing with those who recognize no social value in the Gospel, the opposite extreme must be avoided. It would not be reasonable to urge that Christ's mission was, before everything, social; that His teaching supplies all the elements of a definite social programme; that the preaching of His Gospel was the starting-point of the revolutionary movements which have disturbed, and still disturb, society.

I. Christ's Mission was not, primarily, of a Social Character.

We will not stop to prove that our Saviour's mission was of an essentially spiritual order, and that His teaching was chiefly, though not exclusively, of a theological character. A glance at His life and preaching is sufficient to convince the most prejudiced that He was above all engaged in founding a religion, establishing a Church, and leading souls to eternal life. All this stands out so clearly in the Gospel that it is difficult to understand how minds can be found

blind enough to dispute the supernatural side of Christ's work and redemption. This aspect towers above, sums up, and eclipses all the rest. It needs not even a superficial study of the divine personality of Jesus to see that He was more than a social reformer.

Even were He declared to be the wisest, the most enlightened, most attractive, and superhuman of all reformers, justice would not be done to Him, and that which will ever be the distinctive feature of His mission would be left in shadow. He was better than a social reformer. His aims were higher; His efforts tended before all to the sanctification of souls and the extension of His Father's Kingdom. That did not prevent the preaching of His Gospel from being, for almost the whole world, the beginning of a tremendous social, as well as religious and moral, transformation.

"In many of the processes of applied science, there are certain results known as by-products, which are thrown off or precipitated on the way to the special result desired. It may happen that these by-products are of the utmost value; but none the less they are obtained by the way. Such a by-product is the social teaching of Jesus. It was not the end towards which His mission was directed; it came about as He fulfilled that mission. To reconstruct the Gospels so as to make them primarily a programme of social reform is to mistake the by-product for the end

specifically sought, and in the desire to find a place for Jesus within the modern age, to forfeit that which gives Him His place in all ages."[1]

It must not, however, be thought that, because of the subordination in the Gospel of the social question to those on a higher plane, and because of the somewhat "occasional, fragmentary, and unsystematic" manner in which this problem is there taken up and treated, it is very difficult to draw from Christ's teachings general principles applicable to modern life. Nothing of the kind. It is because Jesus soars above human contingencies, and dominates the social anxieties of His time, that His teaching is characterised by so much wisdom and penetration. To see well, an observer must look from a height. Had He not placed Himself above the affairs of this world, Christ would not have shown that marvellous perception of things, which of itself justly causes Him to be more listened to than any other master. It was His religious mission which gave Him such great authority in social matters, and which, far from turning Him away from our material miseries, has drawn Him towards them, and has inspired Him to leave us the means whereby to remedy them.

[1] Peabody : *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 79.

II. The Elements of a definite Social Programme must not be sought in the Gospel.

While maintaining that the Gospel has a wide social import, and that the most valuable teaching can be drawn f om it concerning the relations which should exist among men, we by no means contend that in the Gospel social problems are stated, studied, and solved with the accuracy, detail, clearness, and system to be found to-day in the special works in which they are discussed. The elements of a complete and didactic course of sociology must not be sought for in the Gospel. Still less would it be possible to extract a treatise on political economy from this Divine Book, or to claim that it contains an adequate solution of the difficulties connected with the production of wealth and its distribution, the relations between employers and employed, labour contracts, wages, and other points of this most complex social question.

This question does not date from to-day. It existed at the time of Christ and before. It is of all times and all lands.[1] One might almost say that it is as old as the world. Everywhere and always, since the formation of society, have

[1] To maintain that the Social Question is "a modern invention," would be to ignore the teachings of history. Though under its present juridical and economic forms of right of property, and of conflict between capital and labour, it is new, it has always existed under the form of the conflict between rich and poor.

there been on earth regrettable injustices, shocking inequalities, undeserved suffering and misery, clashing of interests, class rivalries, and, under one form or another, abuses, unrest, attacks and struggles, as grave as those we see around us. Throughout the ages of humanity, this state of things has attracted the attention of moralists and philosophers. They have elaborated plans of reform, invented systems, suggested remedies, evolved theories, for replacing society on its normal basis, for suppressing social wrongs, and for securing greater justice between man and man.

Aristotle and Plato, to quote them only, have written formal treatises on the subject.[1] Their books have become antiquated, and have had but a very superficial and ephemeral influence. They are consulted only out of curiosity about the past. They are only studied by a few learned men, and are of scarcely any use, at the present day, except to show into what errors and extravagances great minds may fall.

[1] Aristotle has developed his economic, political, and social ideas in his book on *Politics*. Plato has put forth his in the *Republic*. It is surprising to find in these famous books theories which are literally monstrous. It is almost incomprehensible that two men, justly classed among the most refined, most clear-sighted, and most renowned, should have advocated or excused certain savage customs which nature condemns, and which are a disgrace to humanity. After reading such books, we feel the incomparable superiority of Christian teaching, and the greatness of the transformation it has effected in the world. How paltry do these works appear when compared with the Gospel!

The cause of the rapid oblivion into which these books have fallen is not merely that they contain what is false, hard, unnatural, and anti-human. Their evil teaching has certainly been detrimental to their success; but the chief reason why they have not had a deeper, wider, and more lasting effect is because they were written for a particular period and environment. When drawing up their social programme, the authors were necessarily led to occupy themselves mainly with the needs and abuses before their eyes, and to write for a concrete society, such as it was in their own time and country: a society with its special laws, traditions, aspirations, resources, and organization.

Such programmes can only have an essentially local and particular character, which does not allow of adaptation to all times and surroundings. Their fate is bound up with that of the circumstances which called them forth; when these cease to exist, they too must disappear. They become inapplicable as soon as the social conditions into which they fitted are modified, be it ever so little; and these conditions are very quickly modified in a world where everything changes unceasingly. A treatise on sociology becomes old-fashioned in the course of fifty years.

If Christ had proposed to give in His Gospel a full course of political economy, as such, it would probably not have survived Him. It would have shared the fate of all other reforms,

ancient or modern. He would have worked but for a fixed period and environment, beyond which His reforms would have been, as a whole, inapplicable. He would have been able to give good rules for the suppression of abuses existing around Him, and to lay down excellent principles for ensuring more justice and charity among His fellow-countrymen; but, as social needs are not everywhere and always the same, His reform, though wonderfully well adapted to the situation of the Jewish people, might have been quite unsuited to the Greeks and Romans of His time. Besides, though perfect at that time, it would probably be inapplicable, and perhaps even hurtful, at the present day.

"Impersonality and detachment from contingencies constitute the originality of this social teaching, and also its easiness of adaptation. It suits every society, because it was not given to one in particular. Centuries will follow each other, men will disappear and make way for others, but the Sermon on the Mount will always be of the same social value. How greatly mistaken, then, are those who claim to have found in the Gospel a treatise on political economy, or a programme of reform. It is fortunate that such is not the case. Treatises and programmes grow old and pass away—those of Jesus would have had the same fate."[1]

[1] A. Lugan: *L'Enseignement social de Jésus*, p. xx.

Christ found Himself face to face with the many social problems of His day; He did not shun them, still He occupied Himself with them but incidentally, and with no systematic plan. His teaching on matters of a practical nature was given, one might say, without connection or method. He evinced no didactic purpose, nor intention to present a co-ordinated and complete course of instruction. Circumstances led Him to utter His thoughts. A particular case was submitted to Him, or a question was asked on some special point, or an incident occurred, from all of which He took occasion to show His way of looking at things here below. This He generally expressed in the form of a short answer to the question put or of a practical solution of the case proposed.

His social teaching is of a character which has aptly been called "accidental and fragmentary." But it is possible to collect these scattered elements, to bring them together, to connect them with each other and with the rest of the Gospel teaching. In this way, the Master's idea can be extracted, general principles reflecting it can be formulated, and the foundations laid of a really Christian sociology. Still, in order to grasp thoroughly the meaning of Christ's words or the bearing of His answers, great account must be taken of the circumstances in which these words were spoken and these replies given; of the

state of mind of the audience, and of the aim proposed to Himself by our Lord in a particular case. If this be done, certain difficulties disappear of themselves, as also certain apparent contradictions or incompatibilities which at first sight seem striking and disconcerting, if the texts be isolated which comment on and explain them.

Running through these different texts, and underlying the numerous answers, is to be found a guiding thought, always self consistent, and harmoniously uniting passages of the Gospel which, taken separately, may seem difficult to reconcile or to justify.

Because it is occasional and fragmentary, Christ's social teaching must necessarily seem wanting in fulness, precision, synthesis, and scientific form. Those who consider only strict method to be of value, readily treat it as experimental. That has not prevented it from exercising on human destinies an influence as beneficial as it has been extensive.

Before leaving this subject, it will be of interest to note the profound contrast between Christ's manner, and that of the prophets under the Old Law.

"They threw themselves into the midst of the struggle for national righteousness, exhorting, rebuking, upraiding their people as they wavered or retreated into wrong; Jesus surveys this

struggle, as it were, from above, as an incident in the great campaign of God. The prophets wrestled with the waves of social agitation; Jesus walked upon them. The difference was not so much one of social intention as of social horizon. The work of a reformer is for his own age; that of a revealer for all ages."[1]

Consequently, we must not look in the Gospel for what Christ has not put there, and could not have put there, "without changing and completely confusing it," as Harnack remarks.[2]

His social teaching was not addressed to His contemporaries alone; it went beyond them, and, thanks to its impersonal character, reaches out to all generations to the end of time. In its essence, Christianity is a religion and not a sociology; but like every religion, and more than any other, it contains a kind of latent sociology.

In the Gospel we have something better than a system. Systems, as has been remarked, fit into a definite setting; outside it, they do more harm than good. Christianity gives us something worldwide and permanent, a frame of mind, an orientation of energy from which may be obtained, at each stage of social development, the greatest possible amount of justice. Christian principles are therefore of capital importance to society and its organization. To use our Lord's

1 Peabody: *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 87.
2 *What is Christianity?* v.

expression, they are a leaven which ought to penetrate the whole mass.[1]

III. The Preaching of the Gospel was not the beginning of any Revolutionary Movement.

If Christ was the greatest of social reformers, He was also the wisest, most prudent, most moderate, most patient, and most peaceful. He was in no sense a demagogue, or public agitator. He stirred up no hatred, aroused no unruly desires, and made no unworthy concession to popular passions. He never excited class against class, or led the people to attack any institution or authority. He effected His reform without shock, fratricidal war, bloodshed, destruction, or heaping up of ruins—in a word, without any of the usual accompaniments of human revolutions. To transform society according to His ideal, He had recourse neither to declamation nor to violence, He

[1] But though we consider it useless to try to find in the Gospel "the elements of a definite social programme," we do not therefore class ourselves with those who would have us believe that the social teaching of the Gospel is contained in the single precept: "Love one another." Properly understood and applied, this maxim would undoubtedly produce admirable social results; by means of it Jesus "threw light on the concrete relations of life, on the world of hunger, poverty, and misfortune," but, as we shall see later, it is far from forming by itself, the whole social teaching of Christ. He did not, of course, promulgate solely the duties of charity; He preached those of justice as well; a fact which has been too much forgotten in the past, and is still too much forgotten.

reckoned only on the searching power of His divine doctrine, a doctrine all union and charity, justice and peace.

In Palestine, as well as in the Græco-Roman world, many and grievous social wrongs were committed. There were defective institutions, laws and customs demanding reformation in many points; all which our Lord saw, deplored, and desired to see changed. And yet, never did He expressly condemn the economic and social order of His country; still less did He make use of the discontent He knew to exist, or of the popularity He enjoyed, to overturn the existing order of things and replace it by one less imperfect.

Such a change could not be wrought without destruction and catastrophe. These He did not desire. He wished to see abuses disappear, but did not consider it fitting to suppress them all at once. He desired the establishment of more equitable legislation, but did not think it well to begin by the way of revolution. He left such means and methods to popular agitators; they harmonized neither with His character nor with His manner of acting. He deemed that the care of ensuring success for His reform must be left to persuasion, to time, and to the grace of His Father. He was content to sow seeds which would spring up by degrees; their fruit, by being delayed, would be the more abundant and lasting.

It might be said that He did not work for His

own age, and that He did not interest Himself in the social problems around Him. By His side lived and suffered many who were distressed. He loved them, He consoled them, He was affectionately devoted to them, and showed for them, on every occasion, a tender solicitude. He never ceased doing good to them, He felt immense pity for their misery, and yet we scarcely ever see Him directly undertaking to defend them against those who oppressed and exploited them. He often spoke severely of the rich, but never roused the victims of their harshness against them. "His example would have weighed on the future, and caused too much trouble in human society, which He came to pacify and not to disturb."[1]

What so many others have since demanded by force, He awaited from the beneficent influence of His teaching—of that teaching, suitable for all times and races because not given for one in particular. That teaching has impregnated popular institutions with its spirit; penetrated legislation, transformed manners, and brought back to earth the too much forgotten virtues of pity, justice, and brotherly love.

He has wrought the most astounding and complete revolution recorded in history, but He has done so by methods far from revolutionary. He has changed the face of the world by using only sweetness, persuasion,—the weapons of the

[1] A. Lugan: *L'Enseignement social de Jésus*, p. xix.

Spirit,—and above all, by example. To Him, more justly than to any other, can be applied the words *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo* (strong in action, mild in speech).

CHAPTER V

PROOF OF THE SOCIAL VALUE OF THE GOSPEL

Christianity does not aim merely at perfecting the individual, but works effectually for the improvement of environments and institutions. While it addresses itself directly and immediately to the conscience, according to the intention of its Founder, it ought not to confine its action to the narrow limits of this interior sanctuary. It is meant to throw its rays outwards, to manifest its power in the various spheres of life, and to penetrate everything with its beneficent influence. To withdraw souls from the allurements of earth and lead them to Heaven does not exhaust its divine energy. It contains saving principles capable of ensuring the proper regulation of society, no less than the good conduct of individuals. It has lights and remedies for nations as well as for the units composing them. And we may safely assert that throughout the centuries, its influence in the exterior world has been as salutary as in the secrecy of the conscience.

The social value of the Gospel cannot be seriously called in question. To doubt it is to ignore the whole aspect of Christ's teachings, to run counter to the best established views of history, and to fly in the face of evidence. "No religion, not even Buddhism, ever went to work with such an energetic social message, and so strongly identified itself with that message as we see to be the case in the Gospel."[1] Jesus of Nazareth was not only the founder of the holiest of religions, and the restorer of the purest morality. He was also the greatest and wisest of social teachers.

But how has the Gospel come to produce these wonderful results? How has the mighty social power contained in it been revealed in the domain of facts? In short, by what means has this peaceful evolution taken place which has ended in the establishment of a Christian social order so far above all that had hitherto existed? We are going to try to answer these questions, and, while so doing, we hope to show that the Gospel offers more than an individualistic religion and morality; that it also offers principles, the application of which is capable of ensuring the steady march, the progress, and the prosperity of society.

The Gospel has exercised its social influence chiefly in four ways: 1st, by perfecting the individual; 2nd, by re-instating the family; 3rd, by restoring to the unfortunate their unacknow-

[1] Harnack: *What is Christianity?* vi., p. 98.

ledged dignity, and by claiming, for all, the rights inherent to the personality of man; 4th, by creating a spirit and formulating laws eminently suited to ensure among men, members of a common society, peace, union, assistance, brotherliness, respect for mutual rights, and the accomplishment of reciprocal duties.

I. The Gospel and the Perfecting of the Individual.

1. *No social reform is possible without a previous reform of the individual.*

The first condition for improving society is to improve the elements that compose it. Its worth will be in proportion to that of its units. It is the fashion to-day, among socialists, to maintain that if individuals are not better than they are, the fault is in their environment, which is essentially bad. Man, they say, is fatally influenced by his surroundings. He cannot arrive at a normal development of his moral being until the exterior conditions of his social life are radically modified. It is, therefore, necessary to begin by improving the system, or, rather, by replacing it; then, and then only, when placed in a setting of justice and of virtue, will man become, quite naturally, and of himself, good, just, and virtuous.

Side by side with a small amount of truth, there is much exaggeration and error in this

conception of things. It is undeniable that environment acts upon individuals, but it is equally undeniable that environment does not make itself. Individuals make it, and that by virtue of their conduct, and not by revolutions or by laws. Society will be good or bad according as its members, as a whole, are good or bad. The reformation of society and the reformation of individuals are closely connected. Each demands the other: they complete each other, and afford mutual support.[1]

But granted that only in a regularly organized state of society can man find those facilities for the higher life necessary for his complete development, it is plain that when an important result is desired, reformation must begin with the individual. Every other method is illogical, and will lead to serious disappointments. "Our ideas of the office of the workman must be transformed and elevated. . . The truly vital interest is that the whole class should rise in material comfort and security, and still more in intellectual and moral attainments"[2]

[1] "The worth of a society, foremost and above all, depends on the personal worth of its members. A body whose members are sick, cannot, taken as a whole, be a healthy, vigorous body. A building constructed with defective materials cannot be an entirely secure and solid building. So is it with mankind. A society formed of a number of men cannot boast of having attained to a high degree of moral dignity, when the dignity of manhood is debased in its members." Ketteler: *Liberty, Authority, and the Church*, p. 34.

[2] Professor J. K. Ingram: Address at the Trades Union Congress, Dublin, Sept. 16th, 1880.

2. Force and law by themselves are incapable of bringing about a serious and lasting social reform.

Suppose our revolutionary socialists attain their ends and succeed by force in replacing the present system by that of their dreams, will there result for the earth, by this fact alone, more equality, justice, solidarity, and well-being? Alas! no. It is not by means of a "general upset" that these advocates of liberty will suppress "social wrongs," and bring back the golden age. By this "upsetting" they may transfer property, substitute one class for another, satisfy certain desires, but they will heal no wound, and suppress no abuse. These will re-appear, probably under new names, but as deep, as numerous, as intolerable as before. Under different forms, the oppression and exploitation of man by man will be the same as now, with an added harshness in the method. As in Pharaoh's dream, the lean will devour the fat, while waiting to be devoured by others in their turn; and through a succession of violent crises, society will proceed towards universal misery.

The few attempts made at collectivism, at Monthieu and elsewhere, are very suggestive from this point of view. Printers working in Paris for the General Labour Confederation struck because they were treated by their com-

rades in the Confederal Bureau as they had never been by their former employers. They had only changed masters, and had gained nothing by the change. They thus saw how true are the words of a writer whose judgement may be accepted, since he is one of the leaders of the Belgian socialist party: "If the workers were to triumph without having accomplished the moral evolutions which are indispensable, their rule would be abominable, and the world would be plunged once more into suffering, brutality, and injustice as great as that of to-day."[1]

To "bring about these moral evolutions," and prepare the multitude for the new destinies socialism has in store, some count upon the efficacy of legislation, but purely human laws are notoriously insufficient to bring such a task to a happy issue.[2] It is a question, in fact, of nothing less than of changing the very basis of our nature; for, as Herron judiciously observes: "As long as men will not lead unselfish lives, nor aim at the good of their brethren, as long as they are not disposed to seek social welfare as ardently as their own, so long will injustice and

1 Vandervelde: *Education ou Révolution*, preface.

2 No political power, no civil legislation can make a man disinterested. The human soul has depths which they cannot touch, and tendencies which they are powerless to modify. Such things are not within their province. To make good laws is something, but not all; for, as Cicero says: "*What are laws without morals? (Quid leges sine moribus?)*

inequality disappear under one form to re-appear speedily under another still more cruel."[1]

[1] Others expect the improvement of the individual from *the development of material well-being*, and the *progress of intellectual culture*. According to them, misery and ignorance are the cause of all social evils; the latter will disappear, so to speak, naturally, under the influence of science and wealth. They say with Gabriel Deville (*Principes socialistes*, p. 68): "As soon as the material conditions necessary for individual well-being become those also of social well-being, we shall see, arising from this harmony, a morality based on the conscience acquired by social solidarity. Under such conditions the action of the individual will pursue the welfare of the general body—and this not merely as an indirect result, but as its very motive and object."

Unhappily, however, facts, instead of confirming, only weaken these plausible theories. Large fortunes and salaries are generally far from being helps to a virtuous life. Too often they serve only to give a taste for pleasure by providing means for its gratification. The words of the Gospel are always true: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew, xix., 24.) As to science, we have statistics to inform us about the necessary and automatic efficacy of the diffusion of moral culture for improving the morality of individuals. During the last fifty years, a great number of schools have been built or enlarged; instruction has been made obligatory, and has been brought within the reach of all. Has public morality been perceptibly modified in the sense of progress? Prisons and hospitals do not seem likely to become empty; and no one would venture to assert that there are fewer crimes and vices than in former times. We must not forget "that, far from automatically producing morality, scientific progress demands and requires it."

It must also be remembered that biological, physical, and economic forces are essentially non-moral; consequently, they are incapable, by themselves, of directing the activity of man in the path which is socially the best. By nature they serve equally for evil and for good; they themselves need direction. They cannot reasonably be expected to perfect man automatically.

Man's instincts lead him to seek himself; to occupy himself above everything with his own comfort, satisfaction, and interests; to subordinate the convenience and good of others to his own. At heart he is selfish, and selfishness is essentially an anti-social vice. "In vain do sociologists and moralists preach social justice and solidarity; these great and noble virtues will remain a dream as long as they are not based on voluntary and spontaneous renunciation. Renunciation is the foundation of social order. Where it is wanting men become a herd, each member of which tries to satisfy his hunger, without care for, and often at the expense of, his neighbour. Individual interests become the sole rule of conduct. Forgetfulness of self is also the indispensable condition of an orderly economic system, free from crying inequalities. If man knows not how to control his thirst and craving for pleasure and luxury, he will never be rich enough, even when beside him there are many who want bread to save them from death. It has been said: To give up one's own will and the goods of this world is more than the foundation of individual virtue. It is the necessary means for preserving and promoting the material well-being and progress of nations."[1]

An eminently social work is therefore done by efforts to lessen selfishness in the hearts of men,

[1] A. Lugan: *L'Enseignement social de Jésus*, p. cxxix.

and to replace an exaggerated love of self by a true and disinterested love of others.

3. The Gospel has powerfully contributed to the moral perfection, and as a consequence to the social perfection, of individuals.

It has done so by teaching them to renounce themselves, and by preaching to them all the virtues which increase man's personal worth.

To renounce one's self is the most difficult of all works, because it consists in correcting one of our strongest natural inclinations, and in changing what is most deeply rooted in us. The Gospel has boldly attempted this work. Nowhere are self-denial, devotedness, self-forgetfulness, effective charity towards others, more frequently and more urgently recommended than in this Divine Book. It unceasingly reminds us of the duty of self-abandonment, of detachment from earthly goods, in order to love God and our neighbour. It says: "Woe to you that are rich: for you have your consolation. Woe to you that are filled: for you shall hunger. Woe to you that now laugh: for you shall mourn and weep."[1]

If it is true that there is no virtue more social than self-denial, it is also true that there is none more evangelical, none more constantly practised or more earnestly recommended by Christ. It

[1] Luke vi. 24, 25.

is the one specially proclaimed—sung, we may say—in the wonderful Sermon on the Mount. Sacrifice is the very groundwork of Christianity, and no one has a right to call himself truly Christian until he has entirely renounced himself. Thus the Master has spoken: and the amount of faith in a soul has always been measured by the fruits of sacrifice it has produced. Harnack himself recognizes this: "Christian faith," he writes, "can only be gauged by the true nature of our self-renunciation. If it does not produce in us a spirit of sacrifice it is but a deceitful fiction."[1]

The Gospel has vigorously waged war against the selfish instincts of fallen man, and had it done this only, it would deserve to be regarded as one of the most powerful social factors that has ever existed. But its action in individual reformation does not end here. It has not preached self-denial alone, nor simply blamed selfishness; it has preached all other virtues, and stigmatized all other vices. Nothing has been forgotten which can help to the interior perfection of man.

It is impossible to conceive a system of religion or a moral code founded on purer or more noble teaching. We cannot imagine anything more capable of inspiring us with a lofty conception of our obligations, or of leading us to an exalted ideal of rectitude, honour, justice, and holiness.

1 *Social Christianity*, p. 150.

It teaches us to overcome our passions, to conquer repugnances, to do our duty bravely, to practice virtue, to detest evil, and to guard our souls from all that can soil or weaken them.

In the judgement of all who have even superficially studied the Gospel, it is admitted that if men faithfully carried out its principles they would lead wonderfully upright lives; and that society would be very nearly perfect if composed exclusively of people careful to observe its precepts. Surroundings would change of themselves, and we should no longer deplore the greater number of the abuses which, not without reason, give rise to complaints from their victims, and excite the reprobation of demagogues. If, in fact, some of these abuses arise from defective social organization, most of them spring from sin.[1]

[1] "It may be affirmed," says Peabody, "of a vast amount of social suffering, that its cause and prevention are to be in a large degree determined by an inquiry into one's own heart, and that the beginning of a great part of social amelioration is the recognition of that personal responsibility which the Bible does not hesitate to call sin. We have become so accustomed to the language of externalism, that there may seem something antiquated and theological in this reference of social wrongs to so personal a cause as sin. We are much more apt to trace the evils of society to unfavourable environment, to imperfect legislation, or to the competitions of industry; and it is quite true that these causes, and many more, contribute to the social question. No tendency in modern life, however, is more destructive to social progress than the tendency to weaken the sense of personal responsibility for social imperfection, and to fix the blame on unpropitious circumstances. The obvious fact is, that for a very large part of social disorder, the

And, just as it is impossible to increase anyone's personal worth without also increasing his social worth, as "to heal each limb is to make the whole body sound," so are we forced to recognize that by the very fact that the Gospel possesses an incomparable power of acting on individuals, it also possesses a considerable influence of action on men collectively, and that thereby it is a very great social force. "Who will deny," writes Guizot, "that Christianity from the first was a great crisis in civilization? Why? Because it changed the internal man, the prevailing principles and sentiments; because it regenerated the moral and intellectual man."[1] It has also regenerated the family, and is thus a means for the regeneration of society.

chief responsibility lies in the passions and ambitions of individual men, and that no social arrangement can guarantee social welfare, unless there is brought home to vast numbers of individuals a profounder sense of personal sin. . . . The problem of industry will open into no permanent adjustment between capital and labour so long as capitalists are rapacious and merciless, and labourers are passionate and disloyal. To whatever phase of the social question we turn, we observe, within the sphere of social arrangements, the interior problem of the redemption of character. Much social suffering is due to the social order; but much, and probably more, is due to human sin."—*Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, pp. 115-117.

[1] *History of Civilization in Europe*, I., p. 31.

II. The Gospel and the Restoration of the Family.

1. *Influence of a good organization of the family on the steady progress of society.*

Society does not consist only of isolated units; it is above all composed of individuals grouped round the hearth, and united into families. The family has been called the parent-cell of society, and rightly so. It is the real social unit. The isolated individual is an exception. Man is made to live a family life at least as much as a social life; and society, though established for the purpose of procuring the good of individuals, presents itself to the attentive observer as, before all else, an agglomeration of families. The family has its unwritten laws, its natural foundations, its providential organization. These laws cannot be violated, nor these foundations shaken, nor this organization neglected, without consequences gravely prejudicial to society. The latter can only go on steadily when all its constituent parts act normally. Society is often rightly compared to a building; but if a building is to be graceful and solid, it must be constructed with something better than defective materials, ill-shapen and incapable of cohesion. With such materials nothing durable can ever be erected.

The family is built up on marriage, and is formed of father, mother, and children. In order that this little society, a miniature of the larger one, may properly develop, it is necessary

that marriage should remain such as it was when established in the beginning by the Creator. Any injury done to this fundamental institution is an injury done to the family. It is also necessary that father, mother, and children should faithfully discharge their duties to each other, and that no one should go beyond his rights. Otherwise, the home would be a scene of disorder, tyranny, disorganization, and abuse.

2. *Sad condition of the family when Christianity appeared.*

Christianity found the family far from its primitive constitution. Its foundations were weakened, its bonds distended; the relations among its members often anti-natural; and the father's authority changed into despotism. Under the influence of time and human passions, God's work had become deeply vitiated, so deeply indeed that it was scarcely recognizable; nothing remained of its original dignity, honour, and stability.

The sad picture of the disorganized state of the family in ancient times is too well known to need repetition. It is enough to recall that marriage was indissoluble only in name. Divorce was everywhere the fashion, and on the most futile grounds. Incompatibility of temper, weariness of one another, caprice, were sufficient reasons for resuming one's liberty and making a fresh marriage. Things came to so monstrous a pass that, as we are told by a writer intimately

acquainted with his times, many women, even those of the highest society, "could reckon their age, not by the number of consuls, but by that of their husbands."

Polygamy existed in many places, and where it had disappeared laws and customs were very indulgent towards those who kept concubines or entered into unlawful union with slaves. When, as among the Jews, it was unusual for men to have several wives at one time, divorce and repudiation allowed them to pass from one to another at pleasure. From such a pitiable degradation we can easily realize to what a depth of wickedness men had fallen, and how insecure were the principles on which the family was founded.

Nor were these the only abuses. The authority of the husband, and especially that of the father, exceeded all limits. He alone had rights, and these were sometimes monstrous. Woman was nowhere looked on as the companion, friend, or equal of man; she was his servant, and often his slave.[1] Always in subjection, she occupied a degraded position in the home, and might at any moment be driven from it at the whim of her master. Her sole duty was to perpetuate the race. And the law gave her no power over the child she brought into the world.

[1] Woman was almost everywhere considered a being of an inferior nature, and essentially incomplete. Plato wrote: "The souls of wicked men will be punished by passing, in the second generation, into the body of a woman, and in the third into the body of an animal."—*Timæus* xvii., p. 347, Bohn.

The child belonged to the father; he might sell it, expose it, nay, even put it to death; and he often shrank not from using this hateful power. "Among so many men around me," wrote Tertullian, "how many, think you . . . how many even of your rulers, notable for their justice to you and for their severe measures against us, may I charge in their own consciences with the sin of putting their own offspring to death? As to any difference in the kind of murder, it is certainly the more cruel way to kill by drowning, or by exposure to cold and hunger and dogs."[1]

1 Apology IX., Clark's translation, p. 71.

In Rome, during the period of its highest civilization, every child, directly after its birth, was laid on the ground at its father's feet. If he picked it up, it was a sign that he recognized it and agreed to preserve its life. But if, on the contrary, he left it there, he abandoned it, and it was forthwith exposed on some public road, without more ado. Scarcely any fate then awaited the unfortunate creature except to perish of hunger or cold, or be devoured by dogs. Sometimes it was still more unhappy, because traders in beggary had also the right to take possession of it, and mutilate it, for the purpose of obtaining alms from public pity.

Under the most favourable conditions of family life the child remained so completely the property of the father that the law could claim no account of the way in which he treated it. In fact, the father's right, which Romulus had given alike to patricians and plebeians, allowed him to imprison his children, to beat them with rods, to load them with irons, to banish them to the country there to till the ground, to sell them as slaves, and also to have them put to death, even though they held the highest offices, and had rendered the most signal services to the republic.

It may be added that this absolute power of the father over his child was by no means exclusively peculiar to

These words give some notion of the cruelties and crimes occasioned by an authority so absolute and irresponsible. And if, in certain countries, the child was withdrawn from the harsh rule of the father, this was not done to protect it from such excesses, but—worse still—to make it the property of the State. At its birth, it did not belong to its parents, it belonged to the nation, which, in defiance of the most sacred laws of nature, took possessi of it, removed it from its family, brought it up at its own pleasure, and refused to look upon it as anything but a future citizen.

In short, pagan marriage was a union without stability, without guarantee, without honour. The great freedom of divorce led to a frightful corruption of manners, and a total disorganization of the family. Under the conditions established or tolerated by law, women and children were veritable slaves, subject in body and goods

the Romans. The legislation of almost every people admitted it. For centuries only a few philosophers ventured a rare and timid protest. In practice no one took any notice of them.

"The Roman lawgivers," writes Sextus Empiricus, "order the children to be under the power of their parents, and to be their servants, and the children not to be masters of their own estates, but the parents, until they are manumitted after the same manner as purchased slaves."—*Scepticism*, Book III., c. 24.

The Pompeian law, by its silence on the point, recognized the power of life and death possessed by a father over his children. The first law likening infanticide to homicide dates from the reign of Valentinian, and is due to the influence of the Gospel.

to the despotism of the husband and father. Between these creatures united by the closest ties of blood, and destined by God to help and love each other, neither affection, intimacy, confidence, cordiality, nor devotedness could exist —nothing, indeed, of all that forms the charm, and constitutes the very nature of domestic life.

Such was the family as Christianity found it. All was disorganization, disorder, dissolution, forgetfulness of the divine law, and even of the precepts of the natural law. Our Saviour laboured to restore it, and to replace it on the foundations established by Providence. He recalled the principles everywhere trodden under foot, fought against passions, prejudices, customs, and pointed out the only remedies capable of ending a state of things so fatal to society. The Gospel contains a true code of reform for the family as well as for the individual. A rapid glance at its teachings will make this clear.

3. *Restoration of the family by Christianity. (a) It has restored to marriage its unity, its indissolubility, and its sanctity.*

The dissolution of the family, the despotism of the husband, the servitude of the wife and of the children, arose chiefly from the abuses and vices introduced into marriage. Reform, therefore, had to be initiated by bringing back marriage to its primitive ideal—that is, to

unity and indissolubility. Now it is difficult to state these two points more categorically than has been done by our Lord. "One day," we read in St. Matthew, "there came to Him the Pharisees tempting Him, saying: 'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?' Who answering, said to them: 'Have ye not read, that He who made man from the beginning, *made them male and female?* And He said: *For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh.* Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh.'"[1]

The meaning of the Master is clear; man must have but one wife, as the text plainly shows. It declares "man shall cleave to his *wife,*" not to wives; that "they shall be *two* in one flesh," and not three, four, or more.

Our Lord's meaning is not less clear as to the indissolubility of the marriage-bond. The Evangelist continues: "'What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.' They say to Him: 'Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorce, and to put away?' He saith to them: 'Because Moses by reason of the hardness of your heart permitted you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and

[1] Matt. xix. 3, 4, 5, 6.

he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery.' "[1] "And if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."[2]

Never had any legislator dared to use such language or to attack an abuse rooted in the strongest passions and upheld by universal custom. Protests were sure to be made against such a teaching. That, however, did not prevent our Lord from affirming it, imposing it, and drawing from it the charter which, to the end of time, will regulate Christian marriage.

He goes still further. He is not content to restore to marriage the essential attributes of which it had been robbed. He gives a sacred character to the union of husband and wife, surrounds it with religious rites, and, by raising it to the dignity of a sacrament, confers on it the highest consecration and bestows on it the greatest honour that an institution can receive on earth.

(b) Christianity has re-instated the woman, wife, and mother.

Had the Gospel done nothing more for the family than establish the three great principles of unity, sanctity, and indissolubility as the foundations of marriage, it would have rendered an immense service to society. Thanks to these principles, which it has made known throughout

[1] Matt. xix. 6, 7, 8, 9.
[2] Mark x. 12.

the world, woman has ceased to be the plaything of man's caprice. She has recovered in the home the place and the consideration to which she is entitled. The children born of her marriage are no longer in danger of being deprived, by divorce, of the care and up-bringing which only parents can properly supply. But the Gospel not only teaches men the sacred and unchangeable laws which govern marriage, it also teaches them the consideration due to wife and child. Saint Paul, the interpreter of his Master's meaning, recognizes that the husband is the head of the family, and that the wife owes obedience to him. In his epistle to the Ephesians, he says: "Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord: because the husband is the head of the wife: as Christ is the head of the Church. He *is* the saviour of his body. Therefore as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things."[1] But having declared the wife's dependence, he immediately adds: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church. . . . So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh: but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church. . . . *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother: and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh.* . . Let every

[1] Ephes. v. 22-24.

one of you in particular love his wife as himself, and let the wife fear her husband."[1]

This language is strangely new; it breaks with all current ideas, and restores to the wife her long-ignored dignity. The married woman ceases to be a mere servant without authority and without rights, obliged to endure all the whims and brutality of a master who often looks upon her as nothing more than an inferior being, incapable of guiding herself, and created solely to submit to his will and to lend herself to his pleasure. She becomes the companion of him to whom she is freely given, his equal in many respects, the loved mother of his children, the honoured guardian of his home. And if she is bound to show him deference and submission, these are generously recompensed by the tenderness, devotedness, and protection with which he surrounds her.

Woman, as wife and mother, can never sufficiently be grateful to the Gospel. It found her in a pitiful state of abasement and degradation. It raised her, re-instated her, placed her on a sort of domestic altar, at the foot of which father and children come and lay their tribute of reverence and affection. Let her compare her present lot with that of former times and she will see how much she owes to the teachings of Christ.

"This improvement in the lot of woman,"

[1] Ephes. v. 25-28, sqq.

says M. Laboulaye, "is plainly due to Christian influence. No imperceptible softening brought Roman laws to this point; their principles implied no such consequences. It was by a complete overturning of legislation that Christian ideas made way for themselves, and secured for the mother her rightful position. This legal revolution, which dates from Constantine, was the consecration of the great social revolution which had begun three centuries earlier. Those who accuse Constantine and Justinian of having overthrown Roman jurisprudence, are blind to this fact. Without doubt, they overthrew pagan antiquity, but they did so in order to replace the harshness of ancient principles by the gentleness of Christianity. This explains why Roman law has lasted till the present day. It is not the law of the republic, but that of the Christian emperors; it is Christian morality realized in constitutions. Pagan Rome has perished, or withered by degrees; the only living branches of it have come to us from Christianity, and they will last as long as this divine religion."[1]

(c) Christianity has taught respect for the child.

The child owes to it at least as much as woman. If its condition has been transformed, its life regarded as sacred, its right as a human being no longer trodden under foot—if the barbarous

[1] *Inquiries into the Condition of Women.* Roman Law II., ch. vii.

laws have been abrogated which delivered it, without defence or control, to the authority of the father or master—if it is the object of the care and anxiety of the whole family well nigh all the honour belongs to the Gospel. The Gospel never speaks of the child save with love and reverence; it condemns severely those who despise or scandalize it, and in all circumstances evinces towards it a special predilection.

We may say that the child was the darling of Jesus, who, on countless occasions, took up its defence and praised it. "Amen I say to you," He said to His Apostles, "unless you become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the Kingdom of Heaven. And he that shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me. But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. . . See that you despise not one of these little ones: for I say to you, that their angels in Heaven always see the face of My Father who is in Heaven."[1]

It was the first time the child had been spoken of in these terms. Never had a philosopher used any like them, even among those who were considered the most humane. They were a new

[1] Matt. xviii. 3-6, 10.

revelation of the dignity, rights, and moral worth of children.

After having taken in hand the interests of the child and the defence of its rights, the Gospel becomes its educator. Christianity teaches it its duties towards those who gave it life—duties of obedience, of love, of assistance and of respect. It sets before its eyes the example of Jesus—the most respectful, submissive, and loving of sons. It reminds the child of the answer of this model of sons to the young man who asked what he must do to obtain eternal life: "Thou knowest the commandments: thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery. . . Honour thy father and thy mother. . . ."[1] And St. Paul faithfully echoes the Gospel teaching when he writes: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is just. *Honour thy father and thy mother,* which is the first commandment with a promise; *that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest be long lived upon the earth.* And you, fathers, provoke not your children to anger: but bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord."[2]

This is, in short, what the Gospel has done for the family. It has preached the holiness, unity, indissolubility of marriage, the fidelity of husband and wife, the responsibility of parents and masters, the willing submission of children and servants. It has proclaimed all those prin-

[1] Matt. xix. 18-19. [2] Ephes. vi. 1-4.

ciples of domestic morality which, when held as sacred, provide the solid foundations of civilization in the Christian home. We were right, then, in affirming that the Gospel has restored the family, and has replaced it on its true foundations.

Some of our modern reformers—hostile to marriage, and open adversaries of the hierarchy of the family—rise in anger against these foundations. In opposition they propose free love, unmarried motherhood, sexual equality, identity of rights where there is identity of nature, enfranchisement of woman, independence of woman with regard to man, and other crotchets. These tend but to one thing: to force us to go back twenty centuries, and to return to the disorders, shamelessness, and crimes of ancient paganism. Thus they are prepared to deprive society of the advantages gained for it by the Christian organization of the home.

The Gospel cannot be departed from without grave prejudice to progress and civilization. The Gospel created this civilization, and sustains it. Were the Gospel to disappear from the heart of man and the life of nations, civilization would vanish with it. Men of the type referred to would allow it a merely theological significance; while it has been the author of the greatest social transformation recorded in history.

It began by regenerating individuals and reorganizing the family. This work was accom-

plished by methods which we will now describe —methods which have lost none of their beneficent influence, and clearly prove the incomparable social value of Christ's teaching.

III. The Gospel and its Vindication of Rights Inherent to Human Personality: Dignity of the Weak and Unfortunate.

1. *Sad lot of the poor, of the unfortunate, and, above all, of the slave, before the spread of Christianity.*

In the ancient world the rights of the poor and the unfortunate were as much ignored, as much trodden under foot as those of the woman and of the child. The Gospel reinstated these universally forgotten rights, and established their sacred character. It defined the real nature of the bonds uniting all members of the great human family, in spite of differences of birth, education, fortune, and social position. By so doing it restored the disinherited, till then so despised, to a dignity apparently undreamt of even by philosophers and lawgivers.

Much complaint is made, at the present day, of social inequalities. They exist, and may be regretted, but they are far from being as pronounced and glaring as those which primitive Christianity had to deal with. At that period society was composed of two elements, separated by a gulf so deep that, in a sense, it could not be crossed.

On one side was a very small number of privileged persons, abounding in wealth, monopolizing the power of the State, disposing of almost the whole of public property, allowing themselves the wildest extravagances, living in luxury, idleness, and pleasure, looking on themselves as beings of a superior nature and believing the rest of the human race to have been created to serve them, and to obtain for them the greatest possible amount of comfort and enjoyment.

In their proud selfishness these men arrogated to themselves all rights, and acknowledged scarcely any duty. They thought it quite natural that a multitude of their fellow men should labour, produce, suffer, and spend their lives for their advantage. Lucan expressed this monstrous idea of life, and told us what was common in his time, when he said, with inimitable conciseness: *Paucis humanum vivit genus* (The human race lives for a few).[1]

On the other side was an immense crowd of unhappy men—common people or slaves—held in supreme contempt by the rich, treated by all without any respect or consideration, living in wretchedness, toiling for others, subjected to every kind of despotism, condemned to the most laborious and ignoble employment, regarded as belonging to an inferior race, with very limited rights and an extremely insignificant personality. All trace of the common origin and destiny of

1 v. 343.

man had disappeared. The Greek allowed the full possession of human dignity only to the free Greek, the Roman only to the Roman citizen. No free-born man imagined a slave to be of the same nature as himself, in possession of a soul like his own. All looked on him not as a person but as a thing, and treated him accordingly.

Slavery, in fact, did not rest on a simple distinction of rank, it did not constitute mere social inferiority; it was believed to proceed from a fundamental and essential inequality. The free man and the slave were not thought to be of the same nature; the latter existed but to serve the former. He was a means of production, a living machine set in motion solely for his master's profit, an instrument of labour, figuring in inventories under the same heading as the horses and oxen, his companions in toil. He was part of the household chattels. Law and custom put him outside the pale of humanity. Repose, liberty, family,[1] country, gods, religion, rights, had no existence for him, but only duties.

It is difficult to imagine anything more wretched than his lot, and yet it was scarcely sadder than that of vast numbers of unfortunate plebeians, who, though free, were not treated with much more sympathy or regard. They,

[1] For slaves there was no marriage; their union was not recognized. The law regarded it in the same manner as the fortuitous coming together of animals; its fruit quite naturally belonged to their masters, whose power over them was unlimited.

also, found themselves face to face with the most cruel hardships of life, and were exposed to every kind of privation, contempt, and injustice.

2. *The Gospel has condemned those monstrous abuses and intolerable inequalities; it has reprobated that repulsive notion of the relation of man to man, and the disorders which ensue on the breaking up of family life; it has condemned likewise those weaknesses which are the dishonour of the individual.*

It has eliminated the gross errors which have brought about class distinctions, and has strenuously claimed for the poor as well as for the rich, for the slave and for the free man, recognition of and respect for all the rights implied in the possession of human personality.

Without this regard for individual rights, orderly social life is impossible. For without these rights society is no longer the beneficial institution it should be for all—an institution assuring to each of its members the greatest possible amount of material well-being and moral advantages, which theologians have called *a perfect sufficiency of life*. It becomes an oligarchy, in which the multitude toils and suffers to allow to a so-called "chosen" few the enjoyment of every refinement of luxury, and every comfort of life. Such a state of things is against nature. The weak are exploited by the strong; the interests of the many are sacrificed to those of the

few; oppression and wickedness are in the ascendant.

If the social organism is to work normally, its members must scrupulously respect each other's rights. First and foremost they are bound to recognize the indefeasible and sacred rights which spring from the very nature of a reasonable being such as man. Nowhere, perhaps, are these rights more plainly asserted than in the Gospel, which, by announcing them when they were everywhere being violated, has conspicuously served the cause of civilization and justice.

From the actions and teachings of Christ the following conclusions stand out clearly, and no one will question their social significance:—Man, by the very fact of being man, is endowed with an incomparable dignity. Esteem and consideration shown to individuals ought to be measured by moral worth, and not by birth, fortune, or position. We are all brethren, all equal in certain respects, all born to be free and to be properly treated as men by our fellows.

Teaching such as this, which to us, with our twenty centuries of Christianity, seems quite simple and natural, clashed with all the ideas of the time. It must have caused immense astonishment and even scandal to those proud, fastidious men who deemed themselves a race apart, and felt nothing but contempt for the poor, the weak, and slaves, banishing them in a body from their own aristocratic species.

3. The Gospel has restored dignity to the unfortunate.

Since all men are created in the image of God, since they all have immortal souls, and are all called to enjoy everlasting happiness in the same Heaven, our Lord treats all with kindness and justice, whatever their age, sex, or condition. He shows the child affection and respect, rescues the wife from the contempt of the husband, lavishes tenderness and devotedness on the unfortunate, and knows no distinction of persons. In His eyes the primal dignity of all is the same, and all, under this head, deserve our consideration and esteem.

Where has the lofty dignity of the poor, as Bossuet will tell us later, been ever more clearly pourtrayed than in the touching and instructive parable of Dives and Lazarus?

"There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen: and feasted sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who lay at his gate, full of sores, desiring to be filled with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table, and no one did give him; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

"And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also died: and he was buried in hell. And lifting up his eyes when he was in

torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."[1]

What a lesson for the Scribes and Pharisees, so proud of their social standing, so jealous of the first places, so disdainful and haughty to those who were not of their caste, or as we should say now, "of their set!" Nor is this the only instance of its kind. Elsewhere Christ tells them that "publicans and harlots shall go in the Kingdom of God before you."[2]

Outward fashions have no importance with Him. It matters little to Him whether men are rich or not; man is of value for himself and not for his wealth.

"He was the first public teacher in this world who said that man's true worth was to be determined, not by his property, not by his social position, but only and entirely by what he was in himself, by his mind and by his heart; and that there were certain absolute and indefeasible rights that belonged to every individual human being.

"Jesus Christ says that every man, *as a man*, is immeasurably greater than wealth or rank could ever make him. He was the first teacher of the human race who insisted upon the sacredness and the unspeakable preciousness of every man, woman, and child in the world. . . If every human being, because he is created in the image of God, is so unspeakably precious, how

[1] Luke xvi. 19-24. [2] Matt. xxi. 31.

much we ought to reverence every human being, how careful not to infringe upon the rights of any human being, how solicitous for the happiness of every human being."[1]

Our Lord's choice of poor Galilean fishermen to found His Church brings His plan into strong relief. They were not men of note, education, fortune, nor were they in any way attractive in the eyes of the world. They were quite humble folk, living by their work, on the lowest steps of the social ladder. Their possessions for the most part consisted of their boats and nets, and to them was accorded the very great honour of admittance to close friendship with their Master, and of being appointed to carry on His divine work.

It is impossible to show more plainly what small account was made of all the barriers raised by time and passion between class and class. There is no longer "Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female;"[2] there are but the sons of one Father, equal in nature, and all, by the grace of the good God, capable of accomplishing great and holy things. Intelligence, honour, and virtue are not the exclusive prerogative of any class. There is, no doubt, in society an order of rank, but no caste, properly so called. Caste supposes difference of origin, and all men are brothers.

1 Hugh Price Hughes: *Social Christianity*, pp. 59-60.
2 Galat. iii. 28.

4. The Gospel has brought back that universal brotherhood of which antiquity had completely lost sight: that brotherhood is, however, the only real basis on which social obligations can rest.

"All you are brethren,"[1] said our Lord to the multitude, and His teaching rests on this threefold fact: that the same blood flows in the veins of all, for we are all descended from a common stock; that we all have the same Father in Heaven, who watches over each of His children; that He Himself is eldest brother to us all who are His "joint-heirs."

One day His disciples asked Him to teach them to pray. The first sentence He taught them was: *Our Father, who art in Heaven,* and since then these blessed words have been repeated with gratitude and love by generations of poor and rich, lowly and powerful, unlearned and learned, conquered and conquerors. They are the most magnificent revelation ever made of human brotherhood and the duties created by it. "If we are all brothers," writes Bossuet, "all made to the image of God and all equally His children, all of one race and blood, we ought to have a care for one another. Not without reason has it been written: 'God hath charged every man to have a care of his neighbour.'"[2]

We must observe in passing how much more

[1] Matt. xxiii. 8.

[2] *Politique tirée de l'Ecriture,* I., art. 1, n. 5.

easy it is to explain the existence of social duties through the Christian idea of brotherhood than by the worldly notion of solidarity. The very fact of our being brothers gives birth to obligations of mutual assistance, and kindly dealings with one another, which are everywhere and always recognized. The fact of having received benefits from society—a fact commonly set before us nowadays as the basis of human solidarity—does not necessarily imply the strict duty of giving back to others what we have ourselves received.[1]

"There can be no obligation in it," as M.

[1] This is the way in which M. Léon Bourgeois tries to establish the existence of our pretended debt to society, and the duties to our fellows which would result from it. He says: "Our bodily capabilities, the tools and produce of our labour, our instincts, the words we use, the ideas guiding us, our knowledge of the world around us—all these are the slow productions of the past. Since our birth, this past has put them all at our disposal, within our reach, and they are, for the most part, incorporated in us.

"As soon as the child definitely leaves its mother's breast and becomes a separate being, receiving its nourishment from without, it is a debtor. It cannot take a step, nor make a movement, nor satisfy a want, nor use one of its growing powers, without drawing upon the immense store of utilities accumulated by humanity.

"The child owes a debt for nourishment; each article of food is the result of a long cultivation which, in the course of centuries, has reproduced, multiplied, and improved the vegetable and animal species shortly to be converted into his flesh and blood. He owes a debt for his language, in which, imperfect though it be as yet, each word formed by his lips will be received from the lips of his parents or teachers, who have themselves learned it like him. How great is his indebtedness for the books and tools supplied him by school and workshop. . . He has debts every-

Fonsegrive has very well said, "except to a definite person, and in an equally definite matter. Thus, if it be true, as we do not dispute, that we are born debtors, who is it that has lent to us, and what can we give in exchange for what we have received, which, precisely because of its nature, is incommunicable? If there is a debt, there must be a lender; now, in the system of the solidarists this lender is everybody and nobody; he is unknown and nameless; and, by a strange departure from all laws regulating debt and other contracts, this debt is to be paid to others, unknown to the lender, and without any presumptive evidence of the existence of the obligation."[1]

where. The longer he lives, the more will his debts increase—debts to all the dead who have bequeathed to him this inheritance."—*Solidarity*, p. 118.

How can we discharge this manifest debt to those who have preceded us, save by leaving it in the hands of those who will follow us? And the sole way of doing so will consist "in offering our life and activity to serve the great collective organization of life," in order, in our turn, to increase the patrimony left to us as a deposit. To this we are bound by a quasi-contract, and thus, say the solidarists, outside all philosophical conceptions and all religious systems, the theory of social duty is founded. If we may believe them, this foundation is as firm, according to M. Jules Payot's expression, "as an indestructible bed of rock."—Many a time has the contrary been peremptorily proved to them.

1 *Solidarity, Pity, and Charity*, p. 22.

For his part, M. Malapert cannot see whence the solidarist imperative derives its obligatory character. "If your solidarity," he writes, "is necessary, it will come into existence quite well without me, and I need not toil in order to help nature to pursue and attain her ends: my own interest is nearer, dearer, and easier to me; I entrench myself in my egoism. If, on the con-

5. *The Gospel has proclaimed the substantial equality of all men.*

From the fact that all men are brothers, it follows, not only that they have duties towards each other, but also, and rigidly so, that they are all substantially equal. This substantial equality, to whose existence the Gospel teaching bears witness, does not exclude accidental inequalities, differences, and subordination; these form part of God's plan, and are required by social good. Substantial equality implies unity of origin, end, essential rights, and primary duties. God is the Father of all; we are all equally His children. He has the same affection for each of us; our merits only distinguish us in His eyes. Before Him, as Bossuet has said, kings are of no other substance than the least of their subjects.

Equal in nature, we are all ransomed by the same Blood, all ruled by the same law, all called to the same possession of God, all judged on the

trary, it is only by my free co-operation that solidarity can finally pass from the region of possibility to that of reality, show it to me, not as a fact, but as an ideal which you have to legitimize morally, and about which you are bound to prove to me in some other way that I am obliged to give my will to it, and to work for it with all my energy and my whole heart. If you are unable to furnish the proof I demand, I separate from you, refusing to sacrifice my immediate interests to far-off chimeras."—*Revue politique et parlementaire*, Sept., 1901, p. 586.

If the solidarist experiences a difficulty in furnishing this proof, the Christian does not. He finds all its elements in the Gospel. Granted human brotherhood, the existence of social duties scarcely needs proof.

same principles, all destined, not to an equal place in the banquet of life, but at least to draw from our sojourn in society, the same minimum of material and moral advantage. We all have identical rights to truth, to justice, and, especially, to life, and not merely to any sort of existence, but to one passed under human conditions.

We will not go so far as to say that the modern dogma of the triple equality—economic, juridical, and political—is explicitly formulated in the Gospel, but we can readily understand how men of repute have thought it possible to maintain that it "flows logically from Christian teaching." Christian teaching is beyond all question favourable to the raising of the lower classes, to the drawing together of the different elements of the human family, and even to a certain social levelling.

"Equality is without doubt deeply rooted in the Gospel. For myself, it is always a matter of surprise, not that Christians of the present day acknowledge that equality may possess an evangelical principle, but that they have been so slow to perceive it; that, to discover it, they should have been obliged to read the Gospel or the Bible in the light of what are called modern ideas. One thing which ought to astonish us is, that the germs of equality, so plainly contained in the Gospel, should not have sprung up sooner in the

course of centuries. Evidently, many reasons can be given for this, but especially I think it is due to the fact that, in spite of appearances, the Christian idea has never been truly mistress and ruler of the world. Never has the spirit of Christianity been wholly dominant and wholly free. Otherwise, if the Gospel could have brought forth its germs, and have developed them in an entirely Christian atmosphere, equality and democracy would long since have issued from the Gospel and from Christianity, though in a form very different from that in which we now see them."[1]

[1] Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu: Lecture on *Christianity and Democracy*, given to the School of Higher Studies in 1904.

The fact of a substantial equality among all men is perfectly reconcilable with the existence of a regular and respected gradation of ranks, without which there could be neither order, organization, nor government, and consequently no society.

Antiquity had not the faintest conception of this radical equality. Caste, power, and privilege held universal sway. The same holds good in most of the countries into which Christianity has not yet penetrated. The notion of equality is derived from the Gospel. It is one of the many benefits brought to the world by our Lord. And it may be affirmed with M. A. Lugan that, "the whole aristocracy of race, power, and wealth, as such, cannot satisfy the Christian demand of equality. That society is the antipodes of the Christian ideal, in which some by the fact of birth, chance, or conquest, enjoy all the pleasures, power, conveniences, and opportunities of life; while others, together with their posterity, by the same fact of birth, chance or conquest, are supposed to exist to the end of time, in virtue of pretended divine and human laws, in a permanent condition of inferiority, employed in the meanest occupations,

6. *The Gospel has laid down the principle that all have a right to liberty.*

Another consequence results from the truth that all men are brethren, contrary to the opinion of Aristotle and of the whole of pagan antiquity, who taught that some are born to be slaves, and others to be their masters. If we all have the same Father, we have all, as has been justly

in order to provide for the comfort of the upper class, who have had the good fortune to issue from the head of Brahma. Caste, as has been well said, is nothing but an organized exploitation of the lower by the higher. Class distinction is but a species of paganism, when it is based on wealth or birth, and does not really promote the good of all. Under one form or another, it brings the less fortunate into subjection. It forestalls and monopolizes the common possessions of mankind. Its wild greed of luxury and pleasure prevents the disinherited from reaching the full expansion of their right to life."—*The Social Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 208-9.

Men like Herbert Spencer and Nietzsche, who will not hear of political, economic, or social equality, are un-Christian in sentiment, and would bring us back to sheer paganism. They dream of an arch-aristocratic state in which a select few are to possess all rights, while the destiny of the remainder is to allow a few privileged beings to attain to the "full and harmonious development of self." They divide the human family into two sections singularly unequal in number and influence. On one side are the powerful, the organized, the "supermen," alone really worthy to live. On the other are the weak, the poor, restricted to a mere "cellular activity," the small men undeserving of consideration or pity, and destined ultimately to disappear for the greater good of all. Between these two classes they dig a trench too deep to be crossed.

Neither are those Christians who, instead of looking on working men as brothers, men like themselves, reasonable beings with a right to respect and humane treatment, see in them nothing but machines for production, and treat them as such.

remarked, the same right to freedom: "if we have all the same Father, by an equal right we are all free."[1]

The inference is inevitable.

We admit that the grave question of slavery is not professedly dealt with in the Gospels, and that the Master did not express Himself as explicitly on this point as on many others. Still it is easy to gather His opinion from the general body of His teaching, and we find it plainly drawn out by approved interpreters of His words. Lactantius re-echoed faithfully the tradition of antiquity when he wrote: "God, who produces and gives breath to men, willed that all should be equal, that is, equally matched. He has imposed on all the same condition of living; He has produced all to wisdom; He has promised immortality to all . . . if all have the same Father, by an equal right we are all free. . . Neither the Romans nor the Greeks could possess justice, because they had men differing from one another by many degrees, from the poor to the rich, from the humble to the powerful; in short, from private persons to the highest authorities of kings. For where all are not equally matched, there is not equity; and inequality of itself excludes justice.

"Someone will say: Are there not among you some poor, and others rich; some servants and

1 *Si enim cunctis idem est pater, aequo jure omnes liberi sumus.* Lactantius: *The Divine Institutes*, Book V., c. XV.

others masters? Is there not some difference between individuals? There is none; nor is there any other cause why we mutually bestow upon each other the name of brethren, except that we believe ourselves to be equal. For since we measure all human things not by the body, but by the spirit, although the condition of bodies is different, yet we have no servants (slaves), but we both regard and speak of them as brothers in spirit, in religion fellow-servants . . . . Though, therefore, in lowliness of mind we are on an equality, the free with slaves, and the rich with the poor, nevertheless in the sight of God we are distinguished by virtue."[1]

People are fond of repeating that Christianity, far from condemning slavery, has accepted and sanctioned it. This is pure calumny. The Church tolerated the slavery she found everywhere established; she never approved of it, much less encouraged it. It was not possible to suppress it in a few years; she was not yet strong enough; and besides, to have done so would have very seriously disturbed the world. Slavery was the corner-stone of pagan society; to abolish it without a period of transition, without preparation, without preliminary reconstruction, would have aroused an immense social revolution, fraught with terrible consequences to society at large. Immediate and simultaneous emancipation was

[1] Lactantius: *The Divine Institutes*, Book V., cc. xv.-xvi.

impossible. To have attempted it would not only have been folly, but most imprudent and even criminal.[1]

From this point of view nothing is more tender and instructive than St. Paul's letter to Philemon. Philemon was a Christian of Colossa. His slave Onesimus robbed him and fled to Rome, where he was converted by St. Paul. After his conversion the saint sent him back to his master, to whom he wrote as follows: "Wherefore though I have much confidence in Christ Jesus, to command thee that which is to the purpose: for charity sake I rather beseech, whereas thou art such an one as Paul an old man, and now a prisoner also of Jesus Christ: I beseech thee for my son, whom I have begotten in my bands, Onesimus, who hath been heretofore unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable both to me and thee, whom I have sent back to thee. And do thou receive him as my own bowels: whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered to me in the bands of the Gospel: but without thy counsel I would do

[1] If our Lord did not break "the old aristocratic mould in which paganism had choked and penned up men," He threw into the mass of men the leaven, which, by fermenting, must inevitably cause it to rise. Instead of preaching revolt to slaves, and leading them to the conquest of a liberty for which they were not ready, He prepared them for the independence to which they were entitled by showing them their dignity, and teaching them to live like men. He reminded their masters that those whom they had hitherto been accustomed to treat as beasts of burden had a soul like themselves, and a nature in no way inferior.

nothing : that thy good deed might not be as it were of necessity, but voluntary. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season from thee, that thou mightest receive him again for ever : not now as a servant, but instead of a servant, a most dear brother, especially to me : but how much more to thee both in the flesh and in the Lord? If therefore thou count me a partner, receive him as myself. And if he hath wronged thee in anything, or is in thy debt, put that to my account. I Paul have written it with my own hand : I will repay it : not to say to thee, that thou owest me thy own self also."[1]

St. Paul also wrote to the Ephesians : "And you, masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatenings : knowing that the Lord both of them and you is in Heaven : and there is no respect of persons with Him." (vi. 9) And to the Corinthians : "(Bondman) if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. . . (Freemen) you are bought with a price, be not made the bondslaves of men."[2]

Too sagacious to hurry, the Church laboured to transform and mitigate slavery. She hesitated to proscribe it till she could do so without danger to society. To any candid person, her conduct will appear most prudent. Moreover, she never concealed her disapprobation of an institution which ran counter to all the principles bequeathed by her founder. She did not abolish it, but she

[1] Philemon, 8-19. [2] 1 Cor. vii. 21-23.

turned it to good account. "The fall of slavery," writes Renan in his Marcus Aurelius, "dates from the day when the slave, regarded by antiquity as a being devoid of morality and dignity, became morally his master's equal." Such the Gospel declared him to be, and gave him the means to realize his position.

We were right, then, in affirming that the Gospel had restored to man his true value. It is not content to proclaim that every human being is possessed of an incomparable dignity; it proceeds to give the reason for it. In this it differs from philanthropic philosophy. The latter talks of human dignity, but without furnishing the conceptions and truths which make firm its foundations. When Christianity reminds men of their dignity, it says to them, even to those at the foot of the social ladder: "You possess in your soul, hidden in the secret recesses of your being, and under a mortal covering, a likeness of resplendent beauty and priceless worth—a ray from the infinite Being, a semblance of His eternal majesty. This likeness explains those unquenchable longings for another home, and that more than earthly attraction which at times fills you with wonder. You were created to the image of God. That is your title to glory, the starting-point of your dignity and most sacred rights."

Philanthropic humanitarianism, on the contrary, is incapable of saying whence comes human

dignity, and in what it consists. "This dignity is but an empty name to materialism, pantheism or atheism; in them man will find nothing to elevate him, nor to induce him to honour his neighbour by respecting his dignity."[1]

IV. The Gospel and Peace, Union, Love, and Justice among Men.

It cannot seriously be denied that the Gospel has done an eminently social work by thus restoring to human personality its value and rights. Nor can it reasonably be maintained that it has not powerfully helped to bring back to earth, peace, union, love, and justice, by the spirit which it created, and the principles it popularized.

1. *This spirit is one of peace.*

Christ brought peace at His entrance into the world. Angels sang round His cradle: *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill.* He bequeathed it to His disciples as the supreme legacy of His love for them: *My peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you;* and each time He appeared during the forty days after His resurrection, He saluted them with the same words: *Peace be with you.* We are aware that this was the ordinary form of greeting among the Jews and most Oriental nations. It

[1] Ketteler: *The Labour Question and Christianity*, p. 122.

was, we might say, the Semitic greeting still used by most Mussulmans. But in the Gospel, and on the lips of our Lord, it is more than a polite formula. The words: Peace be with you, might be taken as the motto of Christianity and of the Christian spirit.

2. *This spirit is one of union.*

It would be impossible to recommend union in a more urgent and touching manner than did our Lord in His beautiful prayer to His Father after the Last Supper. It is one of the graces He begged so earnestly at that solemn moment for all who should believe in Him. "Holy Father," He said, "keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We also are. . . That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee: that they also may be one in Us. . . And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given to them: that they may be one, as We also are one . . that they may be made perfect in one."[1]

3. *This spirit is one of charity and love, of patience and forgiveness.*

This may be said to constitute its originality and distinctive character. In the synoptic Gospels we read: "The Pharisees hearing that He had silenced the Sadducees, came together. And one of them, a doctor of the law, asked

[1] John xvii. 11, 21, 22, 23.

Him, tempting Him: 'Master, which is the great commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him: '*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind.* This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets.''[1]

Our Lord, who loved us even unto delivering Himself to death for us, recalls this second precept on almost every page of the Gospels. There is not one to which He returns more frequently, so much does He desire to see great charity reign among men. ''This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.''[2] ''These things I command you, that you love one another.''[3] ''Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.''[4] ''By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.''[5]

He had good cause for saying He was giving them a ''new commandment,'' for never had anyone spoken thus, and it would be time lost to search for teaching such as this in the writings of philosophers, or in the sacred books of the nations who lived before Him. But He does not stop there; He wishes men to love even their enemies.

1 Matt. xxii. 34-40—Mark xii. 30, 31.
2 John xv. 12. 3 John xv. 17.
4 Matt. xix. 19. 5 John xiii. 35.

"But I say to you that hear: Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you; bless them that curse you, and pray for them that calumniate you. And to him that striketh thee on the one cheek, offer also the other. And him that taketh away from thee thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every one that asketh thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. And as you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner. And if you love them that love you, what thanks are to you? for sinners also love those that love them. And if you do good to them who do good to you, what thanks are to you? for sinners also do this. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thanks are to you? for sinners also lend to sinners, for to receive as much. But love ye your enemies; do good, and lend, hoping for nothing thereby: and your reward shall be great, and you shall be the sons of the Highest: for He is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."[1]

After this it is easy to understand that St. John, who had penetrated more deeply than any other into his Master's heart and mind, should, when too old and infirm to give long discourses to the faithful, have repeated these words alone: "My little children, love one another; if you do this, you will fulfil the commandment of the

[1] Luke vi. 27-36.

Lord." The first Christians were so convinced that this was their Master's wish, that they everywhere endeavoured to have, as it were, but one heart and one soul. Pagans, seeing them so united, charitable, and devoted to each other, cried out in admiration, as Tertullian informs us, "Behold how they love one another!"

The Gospel is not content with any kind of love, nor with one purely platonic; it demands one which will act, spend itself, show itself in deeds, and lead to the practice of works of mercy and benevolence. Our Lord went about doing good. On His way, He soothed every kind of misery and infirmity. He called the sorrowful with the words: "Come to Me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you." He wishes His disciples to do good even to their enemies, to render to others all the services they would wish to have done to themselves; in a word, He wants them to be kind, helpful, compassionate, charitable, forgetful of self, devoted to their brethren, as He Himself had been.

To account for the supreme importance He attached to the exercise of practical charity, we need only read the following instructive passage in St. Matthew's Gospel. It would almost seem as if our Lord, the friend of the poor and of publicans, set this virtue before every other, and summed up in it the whole law and the prophets.

"And when the Son of man shall come in His

majesty, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the seat of His majesty. And all nations shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left.

"Then shall the King say to them that shall be on His right hand: 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took Me in: naked, and you covered Me: sick, and you visited Me: I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then shall the just answer Him, saying: 'Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, and fed Thee; thirsty, and gave Thee drink? And when did we see Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and covered Thee? Or when did we see Thee sick or in prison, and came to Thee?' And the King answering, shall say to them: 'Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me.'

"Then He shall say to them also that shall be on His left hand: 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink: I was a stranger, and you

took Me not in : naked, and you covered Me not : sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' Then they also shall answer Him, saying : ' Lord, when did we see Thee hungry or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee?' Then He shall answer them, saying : 'Amen I say to you, as long as you did it not to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting.' "[1]

It is easy to judge from these lines how precious and how strictly obligatory, in our Lord's eyes, are works of charity. To induce us more powerfully to perform them in the fullest measure, He declares He will take as done to Himself what we do for the least of our brethren. It is difficult to imagine a plea more delicate or more keenly stimulating.

" These least ones " may be proud. Our Lord calls them His brothers, and identifies Himself with them to such a point that He is helped and comforted when they are ; and He is despised when they are neglected or contemned.

4. The Gospel spirit is one of equity and justice.

We often hear the Gospel criticized for not saying enough about justice, and for not exhibiting individual rights with due prominence. "The idea most lacking in Christianity," writes Bouglé, " is that of right, with all the latent

[1] Matt. xxv. 31-46.

combativeness it implies. It is idle to suppose that for this idea we may substitute the outpourings of charity. A hundred bushels of charity do not make a grain of the 'sense of justice.' "[1]

Of course justice and charity are perfectly distinct, and both are great virtues. One certainly ought never to be sacrificed to the other; and as a consequence, before taking up charity, it is incumbent upon us first to discharge our obligations of justice. Moreover, it will scarcely be called in question that, in point of fact, there are Christians who talk too much about charity, and too little about justice; justice, apparently, not being in such good favour with them. But we cannot admit that the Gospel is to be held responsible for the so-called Christians who may have partially lost sight of the notion of justice. The Gospel has exalted charity, but not at the expense of justice: otherwise the Gospel message would have been self-contradictory and illogical. How then may these two points be reconciled?

On one side, the Gospel formally requires us to help those necessitous persons who can advance no definite claim to our aid; and on the other, the same Gospel appears to care but little for the rights strictly grounded on commutative justice. St. Catherine of Siena says: "The pearl of justice is always found in the heart of charity."

Our Divine Lord speaks of His Father as no

1 *Sentiments chrétiens et tendances et égalitaires.* Article in the "Revue Bleue," July 1st, 1905.

respecter of persons. He expects results from each in proportion to what each has received. He rewards or punishes according to works. To the labourers in His vineyard He gives generously the wages agreed upon. His conduct, as always, seems inspired by impartiality and justice. However much these attributes are tempered by kindness and mercy, they preserve none the less all their essential elements. They remain the most perfect model of the impartiality and justice which ought to regulate our relations with our fellows.

It is a purely gratuitous assertion that "the idea of right is wanting in Christianity." Let those who make it, say what right is overlooked in the Gospel; still more, let them point out which right is not explicitly or implicitly affirmed.

The Gospel has laid the foundations of justice by setting forth in its full light the true nature of man, his real worth, and his high dignity. All our rights are based on our human nature. As soon as the principle is accepted that we are substantially equal, it follows that, "whatever be the relation of one man to another, rights, and consequently duties, arise on both sides. No one can claim the right to the absolute disposal of anyone—not the adult of the child, not the man of the woman, the father of the son, the husband of the wife, the master of the servant, the middle class of the lower, nor the

city of its citizen. Man obeys, but he belongs to himself. As no man exists without a soul, so neither without his rights."[1]

Far, then, "from being a stranger to every sense of justice," Christianity has more effectually than any school of philosophy, propagated the fundamental ideas on which justice reposes. The Gospel is no more a treatise on jurisprudence than it is a course of political economy; but it has had no need to have recourse "to effusions of charity," to hide gaps which do not exist in its teaching.

It has sown in the world the idea of justice, as it has sown likewise the ideas of mercy, love, maintenance, assistance, union and peace. It has furnished the human conscience of mankind with rules, whereby, if loyally observed, the "social conflict," to use the language of Leo XIII, "can be brought to an end, or rendered, at least, less bitter."[2]

Cabet recognized this when, in 1850, he wrote: "If Christianity were interpreted and applied in the spirit of Christ; if it were properly known and faithfully practised by that large number of Christians who are sincerely devout, and need but to know the truth in order to follow it; this Christianity, with its moral code, its philosophy and its precepts would have sufficed, and would still suffice, to establish a perfect

1 De Champagny: *Christian Charity*, p. 7.
2 Leo XIII.: *The Pope and the People*, p. 13.

social and political organization. It would deliver mankind from the evils which oppress it; and ensure happiness on earth for the human race."[1]

V. The Gospel and the Social Evolution of which it was the Starting-point.

1. The Gospel introduced a leaven into the world which has penetrated it little by little, has worked through it slowly but thoroughly, and has given rise to ideas and customs previously unknown.

The tree is known by its fruit. The Gospel has had too blessed and too wide an influence on society for anyone seriously to maintain that it has no social import, and that its teachings do but give light to individuals for the direction of their own lives. If a doctrine producing such fruit is not a social doctrine, it is not easy to say what doctrine could lay claim to this title. As well might we pretend that the mulberry tree can produce olives.

We admit that it has not "sufficed to establish a perfect social and political organization; to deliver humanity from the evils that oppress it; and to ensure the earthly happiness of the human race." After twenty centuries of Christianity, there are still many disorders, iniquities,

[1] *True Christianity according to Jesus Christ*, preface.

sufferings, miseries, and abuses. But these are caused exclusively by the perverse dispositions of men, who have never yielded a complete obedience to the Gospel precepts. Were these better observed, the face of the world would be wholly changed. Unhappily, the selfish instincts of our poor nature rise against them, and in the struggle, self-interest and our passions have too often prevailed over duty and right. In spite of this, the influence of the Gospel has been enormous. It has propagated in the world principles which have, little by little, acted on public opinion, have insensibly transformed it, and in spite of all the difficulties resulting from a long pagan past, have succeeded in bringing forth in a regenerated world, ideas and habits previously unknown.

2. *The trend of progress in Christianity combines with that of progress in civilization.*

Christianity was the starting-point of a social evolution which has continued and still continues. It gave birth to a moral culture infinitely superior to all that had existed before it, or to what then existed. The trend of its progress combines with that of civilization; the two have always advanced side by side. An infallible means of discovering how deeply civilization has permeated the social life of any nation, is to find out how deeply the latter is impregnated with the spirit of Christianity.

History asserts that wherever the Gospel has penetrated, manners have improved, and the world has witnessed an expansion of justice, charity, care for the weak, brotherliness, peace, and even prosperity. What a difference between the society of our day, imperfectly Christian as it is, and that of two thousand years ago! And who would venture to assert that the happy changes which have taken place, are not due, above all, to the beneficent influence of Christ's teaching? Not a single philosophical, political, or social school but has borrowed from it; and those very ones who affect not to know it, or glory in combating it, often owe to it all that is best in them.

In spite of this, it is considered good taste, with certain people who look upon themselves as advanced, to decry Christian civilization and to prefer to it the pagan civilization against which it made war; they declare that "the disappearance of the latter is a great misfortune for humanity."

We do not pretend that before Christianity mankind was everywhere in a state of barbarism, and was devoid of every kind of culture. But no one at the present time, either of those who so highly extol it, or who unduly depreciate it, would be content to live under the régime of the ancient culture, brilliant as it may appear in the distance, and splendid as are the vestiges of it which still remain.

In one of his Conferences at Notre Dame, Mgr. d'Hulst asked who would wish for a liberty which should be the privilege of only a quarter of the human race; for an equality which should subject the greater number to the hateful yoke of slavery; for a brotherhood restricted to the narrow circle of personal sympathies, ignorant of all social pity, incapable of affording the meanest shelter to suffering, old age, or infancy; for a solidarity bereft of compassion for little ones, the weak, the poor, and the distressed—always putting its own interests before those of others? Who would agree to regulate his home on the basis of the pagan family? Who would be content to live amid the vices, abuses, infamies, which everywhere disgraced paganism? No Christian, certainly, and not even those who reject all Christian faith. This is because, while scorning Christianity, they live by it; because the air they breathe is still impregnated with the perfume of the Gospel; because human morality owes to Christ certain definite gains which unbelief dare not reject.

"The civilizing power of the Gospel," he said, "is still manifest in a society which denies it; it continues the work begun in the ages of faith, and materially improves the mutual relations of man with man. For my part, I do not hesitate to declare that the ideal of justice and solidarity is entering more and more into civil institutions. In political institutions one's liberty cannot be set aside.

Judicial departments are becoming permeated with compassion, and tend to substitute a presumption of innocence for a presumption of guilt. The notion of equality among men having led them first to borrow from early Christianity the power to abolish slavery, now after many centuries, is teaching them the secret—to give free play to private interests hitherto ignored, and to secure for the lowliest a share in the management of public affairs. What means all this? Is it, as we are told, the end of the reign of Jesus Christ? No, it is its extension throughout the ages. It is the prolongation of His beneficent work. It is one of those eddies which, after the ebb of a strong tide, again stir up the peaceful waters, and make currents in them which are thought to be new."[1]

3. *Christianity admits all that socialism possesses of what is true, equitable, and practicable, and may even justly claim it as something borrowed from its own teaching and spirit.*

It is right to consider the generous and reasonable portion of socialistic teaching as a block hewn from the great Christian mass. It comes in direct line from the Mount, on which was said: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their

[1] D'Hulst: *Conferences at Notre Dame*, Lent, 1895, 6th Conf.

fill. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."[1]

This Gospel origin of the best socialistic ideas has often been pointed out. "In proportion as socialism means warm sympathy for the lowly—*compassion on the multitudes* (*misericordia super turbas*); in proportion as it endeavours to reduce the inequality of conditions among men; finally, in proportion as its ideal is an ideal of justice to be realized on earth—so far, I have no hesitation in saying the Gospel is full of it. . . . One proof is that socialism in this sense has never struck deep root nor grown anywhere but in Christian soil, if I may so call it. It has only prospered in times and civilizations renewed or regenerated by the spirit of the Gospel. Græco-Latin antiquity, Chinese and Moslem civilizations, have experienced social revolutions; but they have not known, and do not know, socialism. Their people have slain each other for power and wealth, but socialists have never been seen among them. And the simple reason is this:—The notions of liberty, equality, and fraternity, which are, so to speak, the moral basis of all socialism, only came into existence with Christianity."[2]

1 Matt. v. 5-10.

2 Brunetière: *Réponse à M. Georges Renard*, Cf., *Questions Actuelles*, April 23rd, 1905, p. 165.

The same thought has been expressed by M. Emile de Laveleye. "All that has been done," he writes, "to raise the lowly, and to soften the lot of the needy, is conformable to Christ's teaching; and thus socialism, in its general tendency, and as long as it aims, according to the Saint-Simonian formula, only at bettering the moral, intellectual, and material condition of the greater number, evidently proceeds from Christian inspiration."[1]

This does not, however, mean that there is not a radical difference between the teachings of the Gospel and those of socialism. They have not the same look. When passing from one to the other we experience a marked change of atmosphere. In the Gospel we breathe an air quite different from that of the writings of socialists, even the most sober and considerate. The Gospel exhales a perfume of charity, tolerance, and compassion not to be met with anywhere else in the same degree. A characteristic impression of solidarity is gathered on every page. This gives to the Divine Book a feature so special that it can never be mistaken for or even compared with any other.

In spite of this, it is interesting to point out that certain noble and humanitarian ideas could only have arisen in a "Christian environment;" but it would be a mistake to think that Christianity is but an "infusion" exceptionally suited for the

[1] *Contemporary Socialism*, pp. 137, 138.

growth and development of these lofty sentiments. Its teaching furnishes direction of the highest importance, and long before our modern reformers it proclaimed those dominant principles and virtues without which no social improvement is possible.

To say the Gospel is no obstacle to just and desirable reforms would be short of the truth. Nor would it even suffice to declare that by its fraternal, self-denying, and self-sacrificing spirit it contributes to these reforms by bringing about their gradual preparation and willing acceptance. To reduce it to these limits would be to minimize it to the extent of destroying it.

The Gospel has occasioned reforms; it has provided means for carrying them out without shock or violence, and in spite of opposition of every kind, it has powerfully and directly contributed to the improvement of the lot of the unfortunate, to the pacification of minds, to the union of hearts, and even to the material good of mankind. It is endowed with a power capable of ensuring the salvation of society as well as individuals. This power is so manifest that superficial observers alone can deny its existence. We are, therefore, naturally surprised to find a writer usually so well informed as M. Boutroux saying in one of his lectures at the Training School at Sèvres: "Not only was the idea of Christianity formed without any purpose of realizing it in the Græco-Roman world, but it was conceived apart

from every political and social consideration. It was the idea of a life wholly spiritual and interior without any fixed relation to the exterior and active. Jesus did not seriously concern Himself about the conditions of real life. Can any one who lives in Heaven expect or fear anything of earth?"

Nor is it easier to understand how an assistant-director in the School of Higher Studies in Paris should have written, in defiance of the testimony of history: "Europe owes to Christianity no part of the great advance, accomplished or projected, in social matters. Far from having prepared the ground for a general condition of liberty, founded on a notion of equality, and vivified by the sentiment of fraternity, Christianity put Europe back to a point far below that to which ancient philosophy, and the constitution of the Græco-Roman world, had brought it. The Christian moral code cannot be that of a society based on modern law."[1] Prejudice must be very strong, or antipathy to the Gospel very deep, in those who employ language of this description. Facts, however, are at hand to prove it to be both untrue and unjust.

The Catholic social school teaches that our Lord did not hold aloof from the conditions of real life, and that much may be learned from the Gospel for the re-organization of our distressed society. It insists further that we must read the Gospel to discover the remedial principles we

[1] Maurice Vernes in *La Raison*, April 6th, 1902.

stand in need of, and that the time has come to have done with the false notion which represents religion as a purely private concern.

This school further contends that the effort to react against the secularization of society, and to bring the rights and dictates of Christian morality into the relations of political, economic, and social life, is no innovation, but a continuation of the purest traditions of Catholicism. It believes that the Gospel contains words of salvation for this world as well as for the next, and it is firmly convinced that the postulates of "social Catholicism," far from being additions to our Lord's teaching, are but its logical deductions. They are not "superpositions," but corollaries. Their root is in traditional theology, and in the philosophy of Christianity.

Social Christianity is not a dangerous novelty, but a necessary and inseparable part of the great Christian synthesis. "It is for the multitude, the living proof that God and the Church are caring for them, that the fruits of redemption are not limited, that Christian morality has not lost its power and efficacy. Social Catholicism is logical Christianity; and the popular mind is governed by logic, even when it does not like it. At the basis of Christianity, as our Lord willed it, is *the idea of a Church*,[1] that is, of a permanent

[1] Christ our Lord did not give to His work the essentially individualist character ascribed to it by Protestantism. He desired the salvation of each man in particular, but He willed that this should be accomplished

bond established by religion among all men. The idea of the Kingdom of God, that is, the idea of an earthly society, is to be found preceding and preparing for the one above—one in which God's will is the invariable rule, both between God and

in a Church. He gathered the faithful into a society with its hierarchy, laws, and organization. They form a large family, all the members of which are united in the closest bonds of brotherhood, love, and solidarity. These bonds are such that, according to Catholic teaching, death itself cannot break them, and thanks to the *Communion of Saints*, the expiations and suffrages of one portion of the members can be applied to another. The superabundance of spiritual wealth in some helps to discharge the debts of others. There is mutual aid, just as in the most united family, and from a social point of view, as has often been remarked, nothing can be imagined more touching and more beautiful than the Christian dogma of the Communion of Saints.

Many are the souls who, without sharing our belief, are attracted by it, and declare it one of the most marvellous philosophic ideas ever conceived. We cannot resist the pleasure of quoting a page from Brunetière, although it contains several expressions not altogether exact from the point of view of theology: "To whatever monstrous abuse the Catholic doctrine of indulgences and works may sometimes have given rise, it suffices to bring it back to its first principles in order plainly to see its social fruitfulness. The bare-footed Carmelite, weeping in her cloister over the sins of worldlings, effaces them. The friar begging by the roadside rescues the adulterous woman at the price of his own humiliation. Thus is established, in the ideal Catholic body, a perpetual circulation of charity. The living pray for the dead, the dead intercede for the living. A more merciful justice, a God more compassionate for human weakness, grants to the just the pardon of sinners. And from the centre to the circumference of this boundless circle, in which all mankind is contained, no one is to be found free from the misery of sin, but no one, also, without the comfort of the merits of others. . . ."—*Science et Religion*, pp. 81, 82.

Man, be it observed, as addressed by our Lord in the

the human soul, and in the fraternal relations of all men with each other."[1]

VI. The Gospel and its alleged Anti-social Character.

We cannot close this chapter without replying, in a few words, to certain objections brought against the Gospel, from the special point of view we have now under consideration. Not only do some writers allow it no social value, but they profess to find a distinctly anti-social and anti-human character in its teaching. Its doctrine, according to them, is "a doctrine of death, suppressing life and this world, in favour of a very problematical ulterior existence." They maintain, as we have already seen, that it leads to improvidence, idleness, indifference to all that concerns earthly life and human progress, to the ignoring of the most legitimate demands of the heart, to forgetfulness of the most sacred family duties, to an excessive disparagement of the individual, and to the lessening of human personality.

Not one of these accusations is founded on fact. To be convinced of this, it is enough to read the

Gospel, is not man separated from his environment, but man placed in his natural setting, that is, man living in society. A mere glance at the sacred text is enough to convince us that its teaching pre-supposes, not isolated individuals, without any civic relations, but men socially organized and grouped.

1 G. Goyau : *Autour du catholicisme social*, 3rd series, p. 4.

sacred text attentively and sincerely, without detaching words from the circumstances which explain them, or from the context which gives them their true meaning.

1. *The Gospel teaching leads neither to improvidence nor to idleness.*

Those who maintain the opposite rely on the exquisite passage in which St. Matthew speaks of the birds of the air who neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and whom their Heavenly Father feeds; and of the lilies of the field which do not labour or spin, yet are clothed as Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed. To look on this passage as an encouragement to idleness and carelessness, and as a kind of command to place in God alone the care of providing for our material needs, is a complete distortion of our Saviour's meaning. Although He declares the evil of each day sufficient for itself, He does not forbid all thought for the morrow, but only that which is uneasy, exaggerated, useless, or depressing. He does not wish the care for food, drink, and clothing to overwhelm every other consideration and make us forget the concerns of a higher order which should dominate our lives. But He by no means discountenances our looking after temporal wants, and taking suitable measures to supply them. Such advice He never gave.

What He preached in the words recorded by St. Matthew was the struggle against discouragement. His object was to promote that liberty and serenity of spirit which is not affected by the petty miseries of life. He teaches us that evenness of temper which a narrow and nervous egotism cannot disturb. He urged that strong and simple state of soul which is revealed in almost all His discourses, and that child-like trust which perceives the hand of the tenderest and most devoted of fathers stretched out for protection. From this confidence should spring a joyous activity, and not laziness. How can any one pretend, even when relying on an ambiguous text which needs explanation, that Christ our Lord preached idleness, when one remembers that His whole life was devoted to toil? First He worked at the rough manual occupation in the humble workshop at Nazareth. Later on He was engaged in the no less toilsome labours of the missionary over the plains and hills of Palestine. How can anyone be so rash as to assert that He urged men to shut themselves up in "sanctimonious inactivity" when the two following facts are recalled:—His solemn declaration that He had come to fulfil the law, not to destroy it; and the record on the first page of the book of Genesis that "God placed Adam in the garden of pleasure to dress it. . In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread. . "[1]

[1] Gen. ii. 15; iii. 19.

Far from casting even a shadow of discredit on labour, Christianity has, on the contrary, honoured, reinstated, ennobled, and recommended it. The Master worked, so did His disciples; and the Church, inspired by the example and teaching of her Divine Founder, has always strictly ordered her children to do the same. While asking his Father, with childlike confidence, for his daily bread, the Christian has never dreamed of ridding himself of the charge of procuring food and clothing, any more than he has cherished the fond hope of seeing renewed on his behalf the miracle of the manna, or the multiplication of loaves in the wilderness. He knows better than anyone that if he wishes to be helped by Heaven, he must begin by helping himself, and that work is the means established by Providence for supplying the needs of life.

In case he should be tempted to forget this, St. Paul undertook to remind him, in terms which cannot be considered lacking in clearness or vigour. He wrote to the Thessalonians: "For yourselves know how you ought to imitate us: for we were not disorderly among you: neither did we eat any man's bread for nothing, but in labour and in toil we worked night and day, lest we should be chargeable to any of you. Not as if we had not power: but that we might give ourselves a pattern unto you, to imitate us. For also when we were with you, this we declared to you: that if any man will not work, neither let

him eat. For we have heard there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling. Now we charge them that are such, and beseech them by the Lord Jesus Christ, that, working with silence, they would eat their own bread."[1]

This passage is a peremptory and authoritative reply to the objection we are engaged with. After reading it we can form an opinion on what is to be thought of the allegation that imprudence and idleness are results of the Gospel teaching. With reason Renan has remarked: "The workman honestly gaining his daily livelihood—such was the Christian ideal!"[2]

2. *Nor do these teachings imply indifference to all that concerns life on earth and human progress.*

We have, of course, no difficulty in admitting that our Lord was anxious before all else for the sanctification of men, and for their spiritual welfare. He desired them to seek first the Kingdom of God. Earthly things in His eyes were of quite secondary and relative importance; their chief value being as a means to attain the supernatural end for which all are destined. Their possession will profit us little, if we lose our souls. They pass away. It is folly to be unduly attached to them, and we ought not to hesitate

1 2 Thessal. iii. 7-12.
2 *Marcus Aurelius*, p. 600.

to give them up as soon as they become an obstacle to salvation.

Jesus Christ taught all this, but not this alone. Nowhere did He forbid His disciples to busy themselves, in moderation, with material interests. No word of His can be quoted in blame of those who, in whatever branch of human activity, might desire to devote their intelligence, skill, or strength, to the service of progress. Progress truly deserving the name can suffer no hindrance from the teaching of the Gospel; nay, more, there is no true progress which does not harmonize with this teaching, and find in it support and concurrence.

To be men of action and progress, men of their age and of "this world," Christians have never had to abandon the purest traditions of the Gospel, nor to sacrifice a jot of their Master's teachings. And it will be frankly admitted that, from this point of view, Christians have not cut too poor a figure in the course of centuries, and that they will advantageously bear comparison with exponents of any kind of religion or free-thought.

If Christ commanded some to "sell their goods and give them to the poor," He gave not the command to all, but only to those who, like the apostles, were to devote themselves entirely to their mission, or to those more fervent souls who wished to attain greater perfection. Others were free to keep, enjoy, and increase them. From

the earliest times of Christianity, some of the "faithful" were engaged in business, trade, industries, liberal professions, the study of letters and art; they interested themselves in the problems of the day and increased their fortunes. They did all this without the slightest reproach from their co-religionists or ecclesiastical superiors, as long as they kept within wise limits, and did not allow earthly cares to absorb them to the detriment of the interests of the "Kingdom."

In the first century there were, as is well known, Christians, nay, many Christians, who manifested a profound indifference for all that belongs to this world. They laboured under the mistaken notion that the Kingdom of God was at hand, when Jesus the Messias would return in glory. They anticipated that they would shortly see Him come down from Heaven and behold Him raise the dead to life. They believed that they, the elect, would be taken up into the clouds and carried to meet Him. They naturally inferred that they ought not to attach great importance to an existence destined to come to an end so soon. Consequently they lived wholly absorbed in the expectation of this early "coming." Their faith on this point was so deep and lively that they imagined not one of the newly converted would taste death before the approaching manifestation of the Kingdom of God and the triumph of justice. A condition of mind such as this necessarily brought about

harmful results. It changed a normal condition into an exceptional crisis. Daily duties were forgotten; earthly interests lost all value; political, economic and social concerns seemed to lack all intelligible purpose; labour became unnecessary; while anxiety as to the great events shortly to take place dominated and absorbed every other interest. This state of mind, against which St. Paul protested in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, was never general. It did not last long, and when at length the mistake was rectified, normal life was everywhere resumed.

Although the Christians of the early Church, like the true Christians of to-day, always set care for their salvation before every other, none the less were they, as a whole, not only honest, but also industrious and useful citizens. They were as eager as anyone to help in any work which promoted the progress of mankind. The fact of their being more disinterested, just and charitable than the majority of their contemporaries is not a reason for considering them simple, unpractical, careless and unsuited for business. Lucian wrote as a satirist and not as an historian when he represented them in the latter aspect.

3. *Neither does the Gospel teaching lead men to ignore the heart's most lawful demands, nor to forget the most sacred family duties.*

With regard to the demands of the heart, only

those which are wrong are forbidden by Christianity; it combats evil inclinations only; it respects and sanctifies all lawful affections, and satisfies, better than any other religion, every legitimate need of the soul. This truth has been proved too often for us to be required to establish it here. It is enough to mention that the power possessed by Christianity to satisfy the lofty aspirations of our nature is such, that it has often been cited as a proof not merely of the superiority, but even of the divinity of Christianity.

The allegation that our Lord's teaching leads to forgetfulness of the most sacred of family duties might justly be treated as serious trifling. The accusation has no weight, and is unworthy of attention. As we have seen, Christ restored the family, gave it back its primitive stability and sanctity, banished the abuses which disgraced it, defined the rights and obligations of each of its members and consecrated the ties which unite them. How, after that, is it possible for anyone to maintain with any show of reason that Christ sapped the foundations of an institution which owes everything to Him?

It is true He said: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." (Luke xiv. 26.) But these words, which at first sight cause surprise, are easily explained, and when divested of the somewhat

heightened form in which eastern nations love to clothe their thoughts, they are quite natural. Their meaning simply comes to this: "Those wishing to be disciples of truth, must be ready, in case of necessity, to sacrifice everything to it, even their lives." Every philosopher, especially those of the present day, when so much is said of the superior and sacred rights of truth, would agree to such a proposition. There is no question here of hating anyone, still less a father, mother, wife, or child; such a thing could not be required, and least of all by Him who has commanded us to love even those who hate us, and who wishes His disciples to be distinguished by the great love they bear to each other.

Nevertheless, there are still other words which on first reading will undoubtedly occasion some surprise. Their true meaning, however, is easily grasped after a little reflection. "Think you that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you No! but separation. For there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided: three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against his father. . . ."[1] He who so earnestly besought His Father for the grace of peace and union among His disciples, wished here simply to point out that with respect to His teaching there would be differences of view even in the same family; some would be for Him,

[1] Luke xii. 51-3.

others against Him, thus realizing the prophecy of holy Simeon: "This Child is set for a sign which shall be contradicted."[1] The text has no other meaning.

4. *The Gospel teaching does not lead to an excessive disparagement of the individual and to a deterioration of human personality.*

It is adapted for the formation of something very different from men described as "anæmic mediocrities, without initiative or manliness." The Gospel has been blamed for exalting chiefly the "passive" virtues, which "may possibly be of advantage to religious shut up in a monastery, but which are of very little service to persons called to live in the world, and to undergo the hard struggles of life." The accusation is unfounded. The Gospel makes no distinction among the virtues; it recommends all equally. Besides, properly speaking, there are no passive virtues; for there are none which do not imply struggle, effort, elevation towards the ideal, laborious conquest of our natural inclinations, and, therefore, by means of action, a real perfecting of our being.

In spite of what would-be "super-men" affect to think of them, virtues like humility, self-denial, patience, forgetfulness of injuries, a spirit of conciliation and of peace, in no way spoil character, or deprive the will of its energy and initiative. On the contrary, they strengthen it.

[1] Luke ii. 34.

Their practice often presents more difficulties, and needs more interior violence than does that of more striking virtues. Only those who are not familiar with them can call them anti-social, or out-of-date. What virtue, for example, is more social than humility, which in these days has been so much abused and cried down? It draws the great to the lowly, destroys haughtiness and arrogance of heart, makes us indulgent to the faults of others, lessens the distance between class and class, softens those inequalities which cannot be removed, and is a most active instrument of peace, union, and reconciliation. From all this we may judge how ill-founded are the criticisms of those who affect to regard Christian virtues, not as valuable allies, but as clumsy hindrances to individual good and social progress.

We do not mean that the texts they quote may not sometimes appear to bear out their contention; but in these texts, the sense, rather than the terms, must be attended to. By keeping to the terms alone, more than one contradiction would be encountered in the Gospel. Christ would be heard preaching now war, now peace; to-day, charity to all, to-morrow, hatred even of father and mother. These can be only apparent contradictions. They no longer exist when we recall the circumstances in which the words were spoken, and the immediate end proposed by Him who uttered them. To be rightly understood,

these sayings almost always need to be replaced in their original setting. Unless we take sufficiently into account our Lord's habitual manner, the somewhat rigorously didactic style of the Orientals, the question which led to the answer or the incident calling forth the observation, there is a danger of being mistaken as to the true bearing of such or such a passage of the Gospel, and of giving a wrong interpretation to some of Christ's teachings. "If," says Wendt, "we take each word of Jesus separately, we must acknowledge that it is not clear, or is capable of several interpretations. We shall be helped to grasp the true meaning by a general knowledge gained from a close examination of other plainer words of the Master."

VII. The Gospel and Democracy.

During the whole of the nineteenth century a keen struggle went on between Christianity and democracy. Christianity had produced our Western civilization, and presided over the formation of modern nations; the democracy appeared as a "great political and social power, which, in its turn, is on its way to conquer the world, and is resolved to remodel, regenerate, and transform it." This struggle is going on constantly.

In the opinion of some, democracy is part of the very nature of things. There is a radical opposition between the principles of the Gospel

and the aspirations of democracy. No agreement is possible, the two must be in perpetual conflict. In the opinion of others, the difference arises solely from misunderstandings, local circumstances, historical causes, all of which may disappear. There would thus be no necessary antagonism, no irreconcilable opposition between the old Christianity and the young democracy. The dream of a Christian democracy is not as chimerical as many are disposed to believe, and there is ground for hope that under the forms of popular government which the future seems to promise, religion will be free to carry on its work of education, peace and civilization.

Which of the two opinions is right? We think the latter; for we are of the number of those who do not despair of the future, and who, with the Popes and great Doctors, do not consider that religion is to be allied exclusively to any one form of government. It rules all, and accommodates itself to all on the single condition that they are just and honourable. Forms of government, like all human institutions, pass away; religion must remain and fulfil its divine mission to the end. If, then, some day democracy becomes the dominant power, it will find nothing in Christianity to oppose its lawful aspirations, or to justify it in treating Christianity as an enemy. The Holy See has many times reminded us that the Church ought not to be represented as adverse to popular tendencies, and Leo XIII.

never ceased pointing out to the masses that, far from being opposed to their sentiments, Catholicism shares all that is just and generous in them.

There is no radical antagonism between Christian principles and the fundamental principles of democracy; whatever antagonism there may be between Christianity and democracy comes from other causes; and only as that antagonism disappears will democracy be able successfully to accomplish the great task it has undertaken. We will now attempt to make good these points.

1. *There is no essential opposition between Christian principles and the fundamental principles of democracy.*

The democratic movement is summed up in a few ideas, of which some have always been admitted by Christianity, others are in harmony with the Gospel, while none are formally opposed to our faith.

The two fundamental ideas of the democratic *régime*, are those of equality and fraternity. Not only are they in no way opposed to the spirit of Christianity, but they are plainly of Christian origin, and, as we have said above, are deeply rooted in the very core of the Gospel. When the democracy asks for greater equality, and especially for more fraternity, it does but claim what Christianity, from the beginning, has

striven to establish. The democracy is not innovating; it is copying the Gospel.

The chief care of modern democracy—one that does it honour—is to improve the condition of the people. Christianity learned this from the heart of its Divine Founder. "In every century, in the Middle Ages, as in modern times, there have been in the Church men who understood that the mission of Christianity on earth—in this *Vale of tears*, as they called it—is to labour to comfort the sorrowful, to assist the distressed and to heal the moral and physical wounds of mankind. Hence arose all those works of charity which have been the glory of Christianity, so that it may be truly styled the religion of human suffering.

"There is another fundamental principle of democracy which, at first sight, seems less easy to reconcile with the Christian ideal. I refer to the sovereignty of the people. The sovereignty of the people may be understood in very different ways. It lends itself to many doubtful meanings, and consequently to many sophisms and errors. However this may be, far from being absolutely opposed to Christianity, it has for a long time and frequently been admitted by the greater number of Christian writers on the subject, Catholic as well as Protestant. It was not unknown in the Middle Ages; nor to St. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest Doctor of the Church; so much so, that some who love to be called

Christian democrats have drawn a whole theory of democracy from the *Summa* of that great theological master."[1]

We are right then in concluding, with the eminent author just quoted, that after examining the aim, aspirations, and chief claims of democracy, it would seem safe to affirm that there is no antagonism of principles, nor incompatibility of doctrine, between it and Christianity. Nations may carry out all reasonable democratic reforms without having to break with religion and Christian tradition. Long experience has proved the truth of this statement. At various times there have been countries where democracy and the Church have lived happily together, and the former has developed beneath the shadow of Christian ideas. It would be incorrect, therefore, to speak in this connection of irreconcilable and inevitable opposition.

2. *Any opposition which may exist between Christianity and democracy has its origin elsewhere than in the antagonism of principles.*

This opposition is due, if not entirely, at least in a very great measure, to the fact that the democracy of to-day sprang from the French Revolution, and usually appeals to it. The authors of this revolution, imbued with the philosophical principles of the eighteenth century,

1 Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu : *Le Christianisme et la Démocratie :* a lecture given at the School of Higher Studies, 1904.

looked on religion as chiefly an instrument of power, a means of oppression, and the malignant production of kings, nobles and priests. This false notion has survived and penetrated the various strata of society, giving rise there to a great distrust of Christianity. The latter, though not understood, is obstinately regarded as unfavourable to the masses, and entirely devoted to the ruling classes. It is believed to sympathize wholly with fallen dynasties, and to be systematically and absolutely opposed to all social progress and the forward march of mankind. It forms the rampart of conservatism, and personifies, in some sort, the counter revolution. No wonder, then, that it should be regarded as the great enemy.

On their side many Christians have witnessed not without alarm the development of a movement, born of ideas "as subversive and as false as those which governed the Revolution." Besides, they say, this movement has so far scarcely given evidence of prudence and moderation. It has committed shameful acts of sectarianism and persecution. Religion has everything to fear, and nothing to hope, from it. Instead, then, of favouring it, we ought unrelentingly to combat it. It is Utopian to conjure up an agreement which is impossible between the Church, the guardian of Christian thought, and democracy, the daughter of the Revolution; these can exist only in a state of war.

Thus the struggle is carried on, not because of an irreconcilable opposition of principles, but in consequence of prejudices, prepossessions, and misunderstandings which, unhappily, have not yet been sufficiently explained. The combat has been damaging to all. "Religion has been dragged into political conflicts; it has received counter-blows from party strife, and has suffered from party combinations. Faults on both sides have aggravated the situation:—faults on the part of the hostile leaders of the democracy, who profess to be the restorers of society; faults, too, sometimes, on the part of those who claim to be the sole or chief representatives of religious thought and Christian tradition."[1]

None of these causes of antagonism between democracy and Christianity belong to the nature of things; they are all in the historic order, and may consequently disappear like the local circumstances which gave rise to them. Therefore, each one should endeavour to destroy them by removing prejudice and clearing up misunderstandings,—and this much more in the interests of democracy than of Christianity.[2]

[1] Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu: op. cit.

[2] "It must be clearly recognized," says M. Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, from whose fine lecture on *Le Christianisme et la Démocratie* we have largely quoted, "that those who to-day proscribe democracy are not to be found in Rome, or among the Doctors of the Church, theologians, priests and prelates—the accredited representatives of Christian thought. On the contrary it is in the ranks of advanced democracy, among men claiming to announce the purest democratic teaching, that we find the tribunes who

3. Only by building on Christian principles will the democracy successfully accomplish the generous work it has undertaken.

It has often been very justly observed that of all forms of government, a democracy is that which demands the greatest number of virtues, and consequently the largest measure of Christianity. We have never asserted that no civic or moral virtue can exist outside the Catholic religion; but this religion is better fitted than any other to teach the self-regarding and social virtues, to lift man above coarse sensuality and narrow selfishness.

Though the following words of Taine may have been often quoted, and may be known to all, they are so closely connected with our subject that we cannot resist the pleasure of repeating them. "To-day," he says, "after eighteen centuries, in both hemispheres, Christianity is striving, just as it did in the workmen of Galilee, to change love of self into love of others. It still forms the strong wings necessary for lifting man above his lowly condition and limited outlook. Through patience, resignation, and hope, Christi-

pretend to excommunicate the Church and Christianity. Nor do they shrink from declaring obstinately that certain failure awaits every attempt at conciliation between the Christian tradition and democracy."

Happily, we can picture to ourselves a democracy far different from that which is represented by these partizans. To be anti-Christian and anti-religious is no more a part of the essence of democracy than of aristocracy. In proof of this we need only cross the ocean, and visit America.

anity will lead him to the haven of calm. It will carry him beyond the boundaries of temperance, purity, and kindness, to the grandeur of self-devotion and sacrifice.

"Always and everywhere during eighteen hundred years, so soon as these wings have drooped or were broken, the standard of public and private morality has been lowered; narrow and calculating selfishness has regained the upper hand; cruelty and sensuality have displayed themselves; and society has become a cut-throat and an evil place.

"Nothing but Christianity, then, can preserve in society gentleness and kindness, humility, honesty and justice."

In order that society may live and prosper, two things are needed: an inheritance of inviolable truths; and a superhuman principle of justice and love. Our Lord brought both these treasures to earth. He entrusted them to His Church, which has jealously guarded them, and unceasingly offers them to mankind; but the world will have none of them, and desires a civilization that owes nothing to a divine source. Hence, the successive failures of all such systems. Neither is the list exhausted if men will persist in the attempt to build the future city on the shifting sand of changing truths, and on the barren soil of morality drawn from egoism.

As M. A. Leroy-Beaulieu observes, the democracy would render its task much more intricate

should it deliberately separate itself from the beliefs and traditions of the past. It will make its project of popular education and government all but impossible, if it proceed violently to dissociate itself from the moral and religious ideas which have been closely interwoven in the course of ages. Above all, its condition will become desperate whenever it shall seek to expel God from the new city as a tyrant or a wearisome pedagogue. It would be well advised to listen to the cry of alarm drawn from the poet by the spectacle of the spread of irreligion: "But amid this progress of which our age is so proud; in all the glitter of a dazzling century; one thing, O Lord, secretly terrifies me: it is that the echo of Thy voice grows fainter and fainter."[1]

[1] Victor Hugo: *Voies intérieures.*

CHAPTER VI

THE GOSPEL AND THE GOODS OF THIS WORLD

Certain writers profess to find arguments for collectivism in the Gospel. They declare that such and such words of our Lord are the most terrible of accusations against individual property. They say: "He anathematized the rich, and strictly bound His disciples to possess nothing of their own. The natural outcome of His social teaching would be a world in which all material possessions would be in common, and where the formula, everything for all, and nothing for anyone, would be carried out with scrupulous exactness. The communism practised in Jerusalem by the first Christians merely put in practice the teaching of their Master."

In order properly to understand this teaching, which is much distorted in the above passage, we must call to mind the social environment in which our Lord lived, and the conditions amid which He exercised His ministry. Placed in its historical setting and brought back to its true meaning, it in no way resembles a programme of obligatory and universal communism. Wealth

is declared to be a danger, but not an insurmountable obstacle to salvation.

The abandonment of earthly goods is a step to perfection; it detaches the soul from creatures, and allows it greater freedom to attend to the things of God. It is, therefore, exceedingly helpful and praiseworthy, but it is not rigorously imposed upon all. We can be saved without despoiling ourselves of all we possess; salvation becomes more difficult, but it is possible. Poverty, in itself, is neither a benefit nor a virtue. To succour it is a duty; and universal poverty cannot be said to be the logical outcome of the Gospel teaching as to riches and their use.

I. The Social Environment in which our Lord exercised his Ministry.

Personal property, even in land, had long existed in Palestine, as is easily seen by reading the books of the Old Testament. Nevertheless, in the time of our Lord many traces still remained of family ownership, relics of the ancient patriarchal system. Certain lands and trades were exploited in common. The produce was left entire for the members of the family, who all drew from the stock to supply their various needs. The head of the family was charged with the administration of these common possessions.

The Essenians went still further. Wishing to be "perfect Jews, fulfilling the whole law," they had established a complete communism among

themselves. They were settled in Engaddi and lived together, being much esteemed by the people for their charity, their simple habits, the austerity of their lives, and their scrupulous fidelity to the injunctions of the Mosaic law. They professed a stern detachment from riches, and shared all their goods in common. Philo and Josephus tell us that among the Ebionites, or voluntary poor, "what each one possessed belonged to all, and what all possessed, was the property of each." Even their clothes were not their own. They stored the produce of their work in a common treasury, and one was treasurer for all, and kept the purse. He looked after the needs of the community, and if one member fell ill, he was cared for at the common expense. When they travelled they took neither money nor provisions; the brethren whom they visited provided for all their wants. Their number was not very large; probably never more than four thousand. But their manner of living attracted the attention of the multitude; it in some sort prepared the way for the almost total renunciation of earthly goods which was to characterize the first generation of Jewish Christians.

Among the Jews, as among the Greeks and Romans, great social inequalities existed, in spite of the measures taken by Moses to prevent a complete monopoly of land, and the amassing of excessive fortunes. There were poor and rich. "The governing classes, to which, above all, the

Pharisees, and also the priests belonged—the latter partly in alliance with the temporal rulers—had little feeling for the needs of the people. The condition of those classes may not have been much worse than it generally is at all times and in all nations, but it was bad. Moreover, there was here the additional circumstance that mercy and sympathy with the poor had been put into the background by devotion to public worship and to the cult of 'righteousness.' Oppression and tyranny on the part of the rich had become a standing and inexhaustible theme with the Psalmists and with all men of warm feelings. Jesus, too, could not have spoken of the rich as He did speak unless they had grossly neglected their duties."[1]

In the eyes of the Jew the poor man deserved no pity; his poverty was a proof that he was not a friend of God. According to a deeply-rooted national tradition, claiming support from Scripture, virtue and fidelity to the law were always rewarded by earthly blessings. "I have not seen the just forsaken, nor his seed seeking bread" (Ps. xxxvi. 25); the wicked man alone became needy. *A priori,* then, every rich man was good, and every poor man, bad. It was not possible to be pleasing in the eyes of the Lord and yet deprived of earthly riches. Riches were the best criterion for judging how much or how little a man was pleasing to God. The poor man, therefore, evoked very little interest.

[1] Harnack: *What is Christianity?* c. v., p. 91.

The poor, in the modern meaning of the word—that is to say, persons without fortune, living from hand to mouth, with no means of subsistence but their work—were very numerous in Palestine in the time of Christ. Their lot was as sad as is that of all poor people, and they found it hard to bear. They were not convinced that the rich were better than themselves, and that wealth constituted an unassailable title to righteousness. With regard to the wealthy, their feelings were the reverse of sympathetic. Numerous traces of this are to be found in the Jewish writings of the period. "Woe to you," we read in the Book of Enoch, "Woe to you who acquire silver and gold in unrighteousness yet say: 'We have increased in riches: we have possessions; and we have acquired everything we desire. . .' And like water your lies flow away; for riches will not abide with you, but will ascend suddenly from you; for ye have acquired it all in unrighteousness, and ye will be given over to a great condemnation."[1]

Class antagonism was quite as pronounced in Judæa as elsewhere. Its poor people cherished the fond dream—dear to the poor of all times and countries—of a juster division of wealth and a certain community of goods. They hated the Sadducees, who insisted on maintaining class distinctions, and the Pharisees, who were always unbearably haughty. All their sympathies were

1 *Book of Enoch*, c. xcvii., nn. 8, 10.

with the Essenians, whose manner of life agreed with their longings. In the opinion of many the Messianic Kingdom was to be the beginning of the kingdom of the poor and lowly, who would at length be rewarded for their sufferings.

II. Our Lord's Manner of Life during His Public Ministry.

As long as He dwelt in Nazareth our Lord lived by His work as a carpenter; but He gave it up after His retreat in the desert. From that time forward His life was one of almost continual journeying. He devoted Himself exclusively to the mission entrusted to Him by His Father, His sole anxiety being to train His apostles and preach His Gospel. In this He differed from the ordinary rabbins. They used to settle in a town and work at a trade to support themselves and their families; they received disciples, but did not live with them, and devoted only a part of their time to them. Christ belonged wholly to His mission, and worked for it alone. In order the better to fulfil it, He left everything: family, country, profession, goods. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."[1]

He imposed the same renunciation on His apostles. They also must leave home, possessions, trade: "Every one of you that doth not

[1] Matt. viii. 20.

renounce all that he possesseth cannot be My disciple."[1] They were not to carry "gold, nor silver, nor copper in their girdles, nor wallet for their journey, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor a staff." At the same time, they were subject to all the wants of life. They had to be fed, clothed, and lodged; but how was this to be done when, following their Master's example, they had abandoned all means of subsistence? Our Lord meant them to live by their ministry. "They who work in the holy place, eat the things that are in the holy place; and they that serve the altar, partake with the altar. So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel."[2] They were sowers of good seed, and "every labourer is worthy of his hire."[3]

As the chief sower of the word of God, and the first herald of His own Gospel, our Lord knew He by right deserved the reward of a profitable workman. Neither He nor His disciples demanded anything, but they accepted hospitality and the assistance given in return for "their divine work." Those who gave to them did but perform a duty and discharge a debt. Jesus and His apostles travelled in a party through the towns and villages of Judæa and Galilee. The fame of the young rabbi, whose doctrine was so beautiful, and whose miracles so striking, increased daily. Many thought themselves happy to receive Him under their roof, and to offer a

1 Luke xiv. 33. 2 1 Cor. ix. 13-14. 3 Luke x. 7.

passing shelter to the disciples in His company. People readily give in that fertile country where cultivation is easy; they willingly share what they reap abundantly and without effort. Thus the hospitality usually received by our Lord and His disciples was simple, hearty, and generous.

Among those who followed Him were two distinct classes of persons. In the first were the crowds who came to hear Him speak of the Kingdom of God, and to see the wonderful things He did. They stood in the road as He passed by, or joined for a short space the companions of His apostolic journeys, and then returned to their homes and their work. Sometimes these travelling audiences numbered as many as five thousand. These He instructed; occasionally He fed them, and then dismissed them. The second class was composed of His disciples properly so called; of those whom He wished to share in His work, and whom He asked to give up all to follow Him. He chose twelve among them to be the pillars of His future Church, and called them His apostles. They lived with Him, forming a real community, and practising community life after the manner of the Essenians. No one possessed anything of his own. All alms or other gifts from friends, admirers, or from persons who had received some benefit from our Lord were poured into a common treasury. Judas had charge of this, and it was his duty to supply the needs of the company. He drew from this

store on days when sufficient hospitality had not been afforded.

Our Lord was accompanied on His journeys by pious women who deemed it an honour to minister to Him and help Him. "He travelled through the cities and towns, preaching and evangelizing the Kingdom of God; and the twelve with Him. And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities; Mary who is called Magdalen, out of whom seven devils were gone forth, and Joanna the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who ministered unto Him of their substance."[1]

This band, composed of disciples and women-helpers, was very like many others—those, for example, which went up yearly, at the great feasts, from different parts of Palestine to the Temple of Jerusalem. To us, whose manners and customs are different, this kind of life seems strange, but it was not so to the countrymen of our Saviour. It was quite local in character. It did not go so far as to renounce all private ownership, and live from hand to mouth; since for these extremes the people had not been prepared by the style of living adopted by the Essenians.

It must also be carefully noted that while our Lord required on the part of those whom He wished to make "fishers of men," a complete detachment from all things here below, and a rigid renunciation of all purely earthly occupa-

[1] Luke viii. 1-2.

tions, He required such renunciation or detachment from them alone; He meant that, like Himself, they should belong wholly to their missionary work. He left to others their profession, their home, and their goods: He did not impose on them the sacrifices and separations He had asked of His apostles; such were required only from those who desired to be quite perfect, and perfection so advanced is not exacted from everyone.

To sum up: our Lord, during His public life, devoted Himself wholly to the preaching of the Gospel, and lived entirely on what was spontaneously offered to Him from charity, gratitude, or admiration. He owned nothing. His heart was completely detached from earthly goods, which He regarded as a weight on the soul, and ill-suited to the accomplishment of apostolic duties. He spoke severely of those who were attached to them, and made a bad use of them; but He did not condemn their use, and never declared their possession unlawful. He lived with His disciples a life of true communism, but such communism He never preached as a part of His doctrine, and as binding on all. Many of His most devoted followers did not practise this total renunciation. Thus, the holy women who helped Him with their goods, retained the full power to dispose of them as they chose. This is plain from St. Luke's words.

"The system of individual poverty and total

division of property observed by the Gospel company, exemplifies this twofold element: a passing social form; and the animating spirit which will not pass away. The sower's constant change of place required this abandonment of home, country, and trade, which our Lord was the first to practise. The Galilean custom of common life among fathers and sons, or among brothers and brothers, naturally made this religious communism easier to realize. In this first phase of evangelical sowing, our Lord's communism was adapted to the customs of the country, and to the needs of an infant ministry. But when the Gospel quitted this local environment and early stage of development, all this system was abolished. The apostles and disciples dispersed, and evangelical communism was over. Its spirit alone remained, and will never die."[1]

This spirit is born of our Lord's teaching about riches—a teaching we shall now attempt to explain, by removing the false interpretations which have been applied to it.

III. Our Lord's Teaching about this World's Goods.

It cannot be denied that our Lord spoke very severely to the rich, and vigorously rebuked their pride and hardness of heart. He said: "Woe to you that are rich, for you have your consolation.

[1] P. Schwalm: *Le Communisme évangélique*. Cf. *Correspondant*. May 10, 1906, p. 508.

Woe to you that are filled, for you shall hunger."[1] On the other hand, He delighted to exalt the poor and to proclaim them blessed. They were the objects of His preference and singular predilection; He never spoke of them save in terms of pity and tenderness, in marked contrast with the anathemas hurled against the rich, and the strong reproaches He at times addressed to these.

If we were to pay attention only to these anathemas and reproaches, we might be inclined to think our Lord condemned all wealth, and consequently, we might look on Him as a distant forerunner of our modern levellers. But to understand the true meaning of these passages in the Gospel, we must not take them separately. We must take them with their setting, and explain them by means of the whole body of the Master's teaching. Thus it will be easy to see that they do not in any way bear the meaning which some have attached to them. We will endeavour to point out their real import by stating in the form of propositions the teachings of Christ with regard to riches and the use of them.

1. Riches make salvation difficult.

St. Luke tells us: "A certain ruler asked Him, saying: 'Good Master, what shall I do to possess everlasting life?' And Jesus said to him: 'Thou knowest the commandments: *Thou shalt not kill*: *Thou shalt not commit adultery*: *Thou shalt not*

[1] Luke vi. 24-25.

steal: Thou shalt not bear false witness: Honour thy father and mother.' Who said: 'All these things have I kept from my youth.' Which when Jesus had heard, He said to him: 'Yet one thing is wanting to thee: sell all whatever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come, follow Me.' He having heard these things, became sorrowful: for he was very rich. And Jesus, seeing him become sorrowful, said: 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.'"[1]

This difficulty in being saved arises from dangers which spring, as it were naturally, from wealth. The rich man is liable to fix his heart on earthly possessions, and to forget Him who gave them to him; he cannot "serve God and Mammon." Again, he is in danger of using them to obtain forbidden pleasures; and, above all, to that of not using his wealth for the end for which he received it. He is not its absolute owner, but merely its administrator. It belongs to God; and he, God's steward, must use it according to the intentions of the Master who entrusted it to him. He has no right to spend it in his own fashion, and employ it solely for his own advantage. He may keep what he requires, but all the rest must go to the poor. Earthly

[1] Luke xviii. 18-25.

goods were created to supply the needs of all. Though they can be privately appropriated, they still preserve their common purpose, according to the order established by God. Those who, to a large extent, monopolize them for their own exclusive use, divert them from their providential purpose. Few have there been in all ages, who have understood this, and who have taken note of the grave responsibilities imposed upon them by wealth.

Rich men generally form an egoistic conception of their rights amounting to a formal ignoring of the divine plan concerning the employment of earthly possessions. It will not then be a surprise that on the terrible day when every man will receive according to his works, many will hear: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink: I was a stranger, and you took Me not in: naked, and you covered Me not: sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me."[1]

Wealth, too, often makes a man hard, sensual, and proud. It becomes a source of subtle temptation. It creates grave responsibilities. Thus it is easy to understand how it is a hindrance to salvation, and how those who possess it find a difficulty in reaching Heaven. "For they that will become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snare of

[1] Matt. xxv. 41-3.

the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evils."[1]

Another danger from riches is pointed out in the parable of the seed. There we read: "And he that received the seed among thorns is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word, and he becometh fruitless."[2]

The rich man, continually occupied with the preservation, increase and management of his wealth, has scarcely time to think seriously of his salvation. His attention is attracted elsewhere. It is solicited by earthly things, and in danger of being too much diverted from those of Heaven. The word of God falls in vain on such a soul; it is stifled by material cares. No pains are taken to gather it up, preserve it, meditate on it, and render it fruitful. Other things occupy the mind; for where the treasure is there will be the heart. It is so easy to become attached to the good things of this world, and they so quickly absorb us and act the tyrant!

When looked at from this point of view, the kind of anathema pronounced by our Lord against riches can be readily explained. They are one of the most formidable and ordinary obstacles to the realization of the Kingdom. Too often, they prevent their possessors from follow-

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. [2] Matt. xiii. 22—Mark iv. 19.

ing the Master. It is not surprising that He should sometimes have been severe towards them; they have caused the loss of so many souls by leading men, who had put their hand to the plough, to look back and retrace their steps.

2. *Riches do not make salvation impossible.*

If there are wicked rich men, there are also good ones, and at the last judgement many will certainly have the joy of hearing addressed to them the consoling words repeated by St. Matthew: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink: I was a stranger, and you took Me in: naked, and you covered Me: sick, and you visited Me: I was in prison, and you came to Me."[1]

Nowhere in the Gospel do we find riches spoken of as an insurmountable obstacle to salvation, nor the total renunciation of wealth laid down as a *sine quâ non* of entrance into the Kingdom of God.

"And behold one came and said to Him: 'Good Master, what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?' Who said to him. 'Why askest thou Me concerning good? One is good, God. But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' He said to Him: 'Which?'

[1] Matt. xxv. 34, 35, 36.

And Jesus said : ' Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness. Honour thy father and thy mother : and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' "[1]

Whoever does what is here pointed out can be saved; there is, then, no question of selling all we have and giving the price to the poor. The passage therefore makes it clear that, strictly speaking, it is possible to go to Heaven without renouncing material wealth.

Commentators also observe that after saying " It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven," our Lord hastens to add : " With men this is impossible : but with God all things are possible."[2] He thus points out that with help from on high the heart can be kept from attachment to riches and escape the dangers arising from them. There are graces for a state of wealth as for one of poverty. By faithfully corresponding with these divine aids the rich man may convert his fortune, otherwise so dangerous, into an occasion of merit and a means of gaining Heaven. He is not condemned for possessing wealth, but for misusing it contrary to the designs of Providence.

Every time our Lord in the Gospel speaks severely of the rich, it is not because they are rich, but because, being rich, they have become

1 Matt. xix. 16-19. 2 Matt. xix. 24, 26.

hard, proud, greedy and covetous. From this point of view, the parable of Dives and Lazarus is suggestive. There we see in opposition, not riches and poverty, but self-indulgent riches and neglected misery. He " who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day," was terribly punished after death because he had refused to take pity on the unhappy man lying at his gate covered with sores and tormented by hunger. He had not done what St. Paul recommended when explaining his Master's teaching : "Charge the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God (who giveth us abundantly all things to enjoy). To do good, to be rich in good works, to give easily, to communicate to others. To lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life."[1]

Detachment of heart is much more necessary for salvation than actual renunciation of riches. This detachment is required of all, of the needy as of the wealthy. All must practise poverty of spirit. Actual renunciation, on the contrary, can only be counselled to a few chosen souls, eager to follow our Lord more closely ; it is never imposed on anyone under pain of damnation. To sum up, according to the Gospel teaching, earthly goods are a danger ; they make salvation more difficult. They are not, however, intrinsically

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 17-19.

bad; strictly speaking, the possession of them can be reconciled with a sufficient observance of the commandments. It is even possible to make use of them to win Heaven; consequently, they are not an insurmountable obstacle to sanctification and salvation. The following statement of the Italian economist, Nitti, is therefore, devoid of foundation: "Christianity has been nothing but a great economic revolution; poverty has become an indispensable condition for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven."[1]

[1] From all that has been said, it is easy to see how erroneous or exaggerated are, for the most part, the following assertions made by an author only too well known, and whose defection is unhappily so notorious. "As a matter of fact, it cannot be contested that Jesus preached self-denial, without establishing a discipline of renunciation. But the attempt to draw an absolute distinction between the spirit of detachment from the world, and the effective renunciation of it, however legitimate in itself and useful for present-day application of Gospel maxims, does not appear in a historical sense to be founded on the words of the Saviour.

"The expectation of the great event explains why Jesus put forward no actual disciplinary ordinance; why He submitted neither Himself nor His followers to any special mode of life that might have interfered with the preaching of the Kingdom; why He considered the Gospel as a message of joy, incompatible with the bodily privations and fasts imposed on themselves by the Pharisees and the disciples of John. But it is for the same reason that He exacted from all those who aspired to the Kingdom, not a disposition willing eventually to sacrifice possessions and family affections to the superior interest of salvation, but the immediate relinquishment of all to follow Him. A man must lose his life to save it; he must hate father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters to devote himself to the work of the Kingdom; he must sell his goods and give unto the poor; it is not enough to be free from avarice and temporal cares, he must abandon the riches and occupations of this world.

3. *Renunciation of earthly goods is the way to reach a higher perfection.*

When the young man in the Gospel had heard our Lord say to him: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," he saith to Him: "All these things have I kept from my youth, what is yet wanting to me?" Jesus saith to him: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come, follow Me."[1]

"The comparison of the disciples to the birds of the air and the flowers of the fields shows that it is not only anxiety for bodily needs, but even work that is forbidden or discouraged, and though God is to be asked for daily bread, it is not in the least intended that the prayer should show anything but confidence in God without personal anxiety; rather does he who prays thus rely entirely on God for his means of existence. The absolute nature of the hope for the impending establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven corresponds to the absolute nature of the renunciation demanded for admission therein, and the absolute nature of the confidence in Him who cares for the birds, and will assuredly come to the aid of men, His children.

"It is in no way astonishing that such a discipline could not be imposed in all its rigour on everyone, even during the ministry of Jesus, or that further departures from it should have occurred after Him; but this is no reason for introducing into the thought of the Master the limitations that the nature of things and the actual conditions of existence set to its detailed application." (Loisy: *The Gospel and the Church*, pp. 74-6.) Our reason for giving so long a quotation is because it sums up the opinions of a whole school, and presents the greater number of the objections formulated against our thesis. The reader will not fail to observe that the author of the passage is content with affirmation. He enters on no discussion, and brings forward no proofs.

[1] Matt. xix. 17, 20-21.

It follows from these words that there are two ways of reaching the Kingdom. The one is easier, meant for the multitude, for those content with what is indispensable. They keep the commandments, but remain amid their family and possessions, using the latter moderately and always reasonably. The other is narrow and difficult, open to generous souls, to those who thirst for perfection, and desire to follow Jesus more closely. It is strewn with renunciations and sacrifices; it is more direct, but it demands more good will and requires a special vocation. To follow it is not asked from all, nor given to all. Those alone choose it who wish to climb higher, or arrive more quickly at perfection.

Experience proves that complete renunciation of creatures lightens the soul, withdraws it from empty allurements, and gives great facility for attending to the affairs of salvation. Set free from material cares and anxieties it can give itself wholly to God and to His service. It does not lay up "treasures on earth, where the rust and moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal"; but lays up to itself "treasures in Heaven: where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."[1]

[1] Matt. vi. 19-20.

4. Nowhere in the Gospel is private property condemned; nowhere is any countenance given to communism.

We have seen that during the last years of His life, our Lord practised a modified form of communism with His apostles and disciples. Still, He never announced this as the one legitimate form of ownership, nor as the ultimate outcome of His teaching concerning the use of earthly goods. He cannot be said to have imposed it on anyone, not even on His most devoted adherents.

Among those who surrounded Him were many who had kept their fortune, and He never reproached them. To those wishing to labour for the Gospel, or to practise something more than the commandments, He recommended abandonment of their wealth, and not the holding of it in common with others. He said to them: "Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me." He did not say: "Sell what you have, put the price into a common stock, and follow Me."

"In short, it has been said with reason that the Gospel communism was a special *régime* of the apostolic noviciate and religious perfection, imposed by our Lord on those who shared His life, and on them alone. It was no attempt at a social revolution in the interest of the poor of Palestine. It was a system standing alone and quite new in Israel. The rabbins who were heads of families worked at trades, and did not live in

common. The Essenians, who lived in common, cultivating the palm-groves of the oasis of Engaddi, did not accept any remuneration for their preaching. The hospitality they asked from their lay friends when travelling, was merely a transitory stage in their lives. They were essentially an agricultural community which supported itself by the produce of its land. Thus, although adapted to the social conditions of His environment, the system of evangelical communism was an original creation of our Lord."[1] This "original creation" had a special and definite purpose, namely, to prepare apostles inured to every sacrifice, and ready to leave country, family, and possessions, to go and carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth. It was not meant for the multitude; our Lord never intended to restrict mankind in general to any such way of living.

He maintained cordial relations with men of all classes of society. He had friends among the rich as well as among the poor. He went into their houses, sat at table with them, accepted their hospitality, and, in the person of Zaccheus, the tax-collector, declared them "true sons of Abraham."[2] He would not have acted in this

1 Cf. *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, Art. *Communisme*, p. 578.

2 The Gospel account of Zaccheus deserves to be fully quoted, because it sheds so much light on our Lord's idea, and on the spirit which animated Him. "And entering in, He walked through Jericho. And behold there was a man named Zaccheus: who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to

manner had He considered it unjust for them to possess wealth.

Again, the complete silence observed by Him as to particular forms of ownership amounts to more than a presumption in favour of its lawfulness. He was careful to point out what He disapproved of in the customs and institutions of His time: pharisaical practices, hypocrisy, pride,

see Jesus who He was, and he could not for the crowd, because he was low of stature. And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore tree that he might see Him; for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus was come to the place, looking up, He saw him, and said to him: 'Zaccheus, make haste and come down: for this day I must abide in thy house.' And he made haste and came down, and received Him with joy. And when all saw it, they murmured, saying that He was gone to be a guest with a man that was a sinner. But Zaccheus standing said to the Lord: 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold.' Jesus said to him: 'This day is salvation come to this house: because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.'" (1 Luke xix. 1-10.) Zaccheus was a publican. He was rich, having made his fortune in what might be called "the excise." He must have had more than one financial operation that reproached him, for tax-collectors were in sufficiently bad repute in those days. In spite of this, our Lord goes with him, eats at his table, and on hearing him declare he would give half his goods to the poor, and amply indemnify those whom he might have wronged, He pronounced him worthy to be numbered among the children of Abraham. He does not oblige him to give up the rest of his fortune; nay, rather, by His silence, He authorizes him to keep it. Here we have evident proof that He did not look upon the rich as reprobates, on wealth as an evil, and on absolute renunciation as of strict obligation. It was of obligation only, for the disciples who were called to the apostolate: Others were merely bound to make good use of their property by using it for the benefit of all.

avarice, judicial corruption, divorce, hardness of heart, want of filial piety and many other things besides. Yet He said nothing about existing forms of ownership; hence we may infer that He neither condemned them, nor desired to modify them.

We are also to a certain extent justified in the view that He did not reprobate them, from the stress He laid on such duties as almsgiving, hospitality, and a good use of riches. If all possessions were to be in common, instead of recommending such liberality, He would have blamed it as an empty and insufficient palliative, serving but to prolong a defective state of things, and being itself a real injustice; for, as a matter of fact, we may only rightly give away what is our own.

A communistic interpretation of the passages in question is merely fanciful. It confounds counsels with precepts. It generalizes too widely the results of a communism meant only for a time, and justified by special reasons. It distorts the nature of our Lord's teaching, and erroneously represents an exhortation to the optional renunciation of earthly goods as an incitement to upset an established economic order.

No one of our Lord's acts or words can be quoted as evidence of any effort on His part to transform the forms of ownership existing in His time. Nor can any valid argument against private property be drawn from the communistic experiments made by the first Jewish Christians.

IV. Communism in the earliest years of the Christian Church.

No one can dispute the fact that a communistic movement took place, shortly after the descent of the Holy Ghost, among the faithful in Jerusalem, and that a real attempt at collectivism was made by certain members of the infant Church. The importance of this movement has, however, been often exaggerated; and from this quite local experience doctrinal conclusions have been drawn which it does not justify. Here, again, it is necessary to state the facts accurately, to give them back their true character, and restore them to their exact proportions.

1. This communism was never rigorously practised nor considered to be strictly obligatory.

"And they were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayers. . . And all they that believed were together, and had all things common. Their possessions and goods they sold, and divided them to all, according as every one had need. And continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart. . ." "And the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul: neither did any one say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but all things were

common unto them. . . For neither was there any one needy among them. For as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things they sold, and laid it down before the feet of the apostles. And distribution was made to every one according as he had need."[1]

These passages in the Acts, so clear and definite, might seem to establish the existence of a rigorous communism. We find, however, in the same book by St. Luke that they are not to be taken too literally. A little further on, in fact, there is a question of the faithful who kept at least a part of their goods, because they were able to give abundant alms,[2] and had a house and servants.[3]

When St. Peter was miraculously delivered from prison, he went at once to the house of the mother of John Mark, where a number of Christians were gathered together and engaged in prayer. He knocked at the door, and was recognized from his voice by the maidservant, Rhode. John Mark's mother must therefore have possessed a rather large house, since it served as a meeting-place for the faithful; and as she thus put it at their service, she had not sold it, any more than she had ceased to employ her servant Rhode.

Total abandonment was not considered obligatory. Nothing in the sacred text indicates

1 Acts ii. 42, 44, 45, 46.—iv. 32, 34, 35.

2 Acts ix. 36. 3 Ibid. xii. 10-19.

that those who, like Barnabas, the Levite, a Cyprian born, "having land, sold it, and brought the price, and laid it at the feet of the apostles,"[1] believed they were thus obeying a rule formally imposed on all members of the community. Much more probable is the opinion that their sacrifice was quite spontaneous, and was commanded only by their conscience and their fervour.

Though Ananias and Saphira were severely rebuked by St. Peter, and miraculously punished by God, it was not so much for having "kept back part of the price of the land"—to which they had a right—as for having "lied to the Holy Ghost." The apostle explicitly recognized this right when he said to the guilty man: "Whilst it (the field) remained, did it not remain to thee? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? . . Thou hast not lied to men, but to God."[2] It was as though he said to him: "No one obliged you to sell your field, and if you did so, you were free to keep the price; why, then, tell a lie?" And, further, there is no single example of any one of the faithful being punished for not having sold his possessions and given the price to the rulers of the community. No law made this a duty.

1 Acts iv. 37.
2 Acts v. 3-4.

2. *The communism in question was essentially local and private.*

(a) It was local: properly speaking, it did not extend beyond the borders of Palestine. It was restricted to this particular environment; it formed part of a special social organization—one more influenced than any other by anxiety in respect of the end of the world and the coming of the Saviour. Wherever the Gospel was preached charity flourished among the faithful. They showed a remarkable spirit of generosity by providing abundantly for the wants of their sick and needy brethren, and by generously helping the poorer Christian communities. "Riches do not render men illustrious," wrote Lactantius two centuries later, "except that they are able to make them more conspicuous by good works. For men are rich not because they possess riches, but because they employ them on works of justice; and they who seem to be poor, on this account are rich, because they are not in want, and desire nothing."[1]

In spite of this readiness to give, and this detachment from earthly goods which we know existed in the beginning among all Christians, we nowhere find, outside Jerusalem, an established community of property.

We do not meet with it in any of those primitive churches in the Græco-Roman world, whose organization and way of life have been made

[1] *The Divine Institutes*, v. c. 16, p. 327.

known to us by the epistles of St. Paul. Each had its *treasury for the poor,* which was maintained by the charity of all; but contributions were voluntary, even in the days of earliest fervour. "They who are well-to-do, and willing, give what each thinks fit."[1]

St. Paul bears witness to the absence of all coercion in almsgiving in his letter to the Corinthians: "Now we make known unto you, brethren, the grace of God, that hath been given in the churches of Macedonia; that in much experience of tribulation they have had abundance of joy, and their very deep poverty hath abounded unto the riches of their simplicity. For according to their power, (I bear them witness,) and beyond their power, they were willing; with much entreaty begging of us the grace and communication of the ministry that is done toward the saints. . . That as in all things you abound in faith, and word, and knowledge, and all carefulness; moreover also in your charity towards us, so in this grace also you may abound (that is, in the collection for the Christians of Jerusalem). I speak not as commanding: but by the carefulness of others, approving also the good disposition of your charity."[2]

We must not, then, take too literally the passage so often quoted from Tertullian: "One in mind and soul, we do not hesitate to share our worldly goods with one another. All things are

[1] Justin: *Apology,* c. 67, p. 65. [2] Cor. viii. 4, 7, 8.

common among us but our wives. We give up our communism at the very point in which alone others practise it."[1] The famous apologist had himself pointed out how these words are to be understood when, a little earlier, he wrote: "On the monthly collection day, if he likes, each puts in a small donation; but only if it be his pleasure, and only if he is able: for there is no compulsion; all is voluntary."[2]

Great is the difference between an organization of this description and strict communism. Communism of goods was at no period practised universally in the Church, not even in the Church of Palestine. It existed at Jerusalem as a matter of fact, but even there it was never obligatory, neither was it at any time positively recommended by the apostles.

(b) It was essentially of a *private* nature. The attempt bore no official character, being but the work of individual initiative. Ecclesiastical authority did not directly intervene; it allowed things to go on. In presence of the movement the apostles thought it wise to await results. They did not prevent the faithful from putting everything in common, but they never represented such a course as obligatory. Much that they said, as well as much that their Master had said, can be quoted in condemnation of avarice and hardness of heart, but not one word can be adduced in blame of those who refused to sell

1 *Apol.*, c. 39, p. 120. 2 Ibid., p. 119.

their goods and put the price in a common fund. The apostles accepted the offering when brought to them, distributed it, or caused it to be distributed, among the poor, but never claimed it from anyone.

The faithful in Jerusalem, of their own initiative and under the influence of various causes, established that communistic *régime* which, after all, was but short lived. Among the reasons which influenced the early Christians may be named the touching union of hearts of which St. Luke speaks, and, above all, the conviction that the Kingdom of God was at hand. They believed themselves near the end of the world, and that Jesus, the Messias, was very shortly to return in glory.

This belief was so ardent, so assured, that many imagined none of the newly-converted would die before the *coming* took place. They readily despoiled themselves of possessions which were to be enjoyed but for a very short time. More than that, being for the most part poor, in renouncing the little they possessed, they hoped soon to share with the Master the riches and honours of His Kingdom. The conviction that the Divine Judge was on His way explains how "this hasty abandonment of one's own contained alike elements of nobility and imprudence."

They had no ambition to create a new social organization, to reform society, to provide it with new foundations, and establish it on com-

munity of goods. Such designs never occurred to them. They merely wished to satisfy the eagerness of fraternal charity which animated them, and to prepare for the glorious advent of Jesus, the Messias, who was now at hand. This was the mental pre-occupation which inspired them and supplied incredible force to their spirit of sacrifice.

The little primitive Church in Jerusalem was like a family. It held daily meetings; took meals in common; gave regular help to widows. Soon, at the request of the Greeks, who thought themselves overlooked in the distribution of alms, it set up an official committee of charity, a body of seven functionaries—the deacons—for the organization of this charitable work. But it did not thereby become a phalanstery or a monastery. To see the difference, we need but compare it with the Essenian communities, which, about the same time, had largely developed, and whose manner of life is known to us from the writings of Philo, Josephus, and Pliny. The resemblance between them is very remote.[1]

[1] Graetz, Cohen, and a certain number of other Jewish teachers at the present day, followed by some Protestants, maintain that our Lord was nothing but an Essenian, and that He borrowed the greater part of His doctrine from that sect. His teaching, they say, as to wealth, renunciation, poverty, oaths and even certain points of marriage, was indisputably of Essenian origin. His manner of life was quite Essenian. He possessed nothing, not even a stone whereon to lay His head; He lived with His disciples, practising the system of a common purse; He lodged with those to whom He preached the Gospel; He commanded His apostles, when He sent them on

3. The Communism attempted in Jerusalem was not successful and lasted but a short time.

It led rapidly to want, and even to destitution. The capital realized by the sale of the property of the faithful was soon exhausted. It had to provide for all the needs of the community; these, being numerous, soon swallowed up the first instalments, and the Church in Jerusalem found itself materially, in a very precarious state. Its

their mission, not to take "Gold, nor silver, nor money, etc." The Essenians acted in a similar manner.

In spite of certain superficial appearances, it is a gross mistake to represent our Lord as an Essenian, and His teaching as taken from theirs. He certainly knew them, though the Gospel never mentions them; during His public ministry He must have frequently met them in their white garments. Certain practices and formulas were common to both, but far from being one of their pupils, His preaching was opposed to them.

The fundamental idea of Essenism—purification in God's sight, acquired by the outward observance of certain legal formalities—was vigorously attacked by our Lord. He never ceased to protest against it. He sat down to table without washing, to the great scandal of the Essenians and Pharisees who were watching Him. And when He said: "Not that which entereth into a man's mouth defiles him, but that which comes out of it." He condemned the very principle of Essenism. He spoke of the Essenians together with the Pharisees, when He blamed the ridiculous formalism of those "who eat not without having washed their hands several times, who purify themselves each time they return from a public place, who do not use cups, nor pitchers, nor vessels of brass till they have been many times washed." All were included in His energetic reprobation of narrow Pharisaïsm. He never approved of the esotericism and mystery so dear to the Essenians; He always spoke openly; His words were simple and at all times easy to understand; His religion does not admit of various classes of initiated. He never was an Essenian, and had no relation whatever with them.

members, having despoiled themselves of the greater portion of their possessions, could no longer provide for their own needs. The sums they had "laid at the feet of the apostles" remained unproductive; they were living on capital, and this quickly disappeared, being increased only by the gifts of fresh converts. An appeal had to be made to the charity of the other Churches, and only by means of the alms received from them on several occasions, did their Jewish brethren escape from serious consequences of a zeal more ardent than wise and enlightened.

Their attempt was not an experiment in collectivism, properly so called. They never put the means of production in common, but only the things intended for use. This was not the establishment of a new economic system; it was but taking the road to destitution, and the performance of an act of remarkable, and, at the same time, extreme imprudence. No doubt this unfortunate experience opened the eyes of those who had gone through it, and thus the Christian community at Jerusalem soon lost the peculiar feature which made it a Church different from the rest.

V. Poverty and the Gospel Teaching.

Our Lord was born poor; He lived as a poor man among the poor; He manifested towards them a special love, showered on them marks of

respect and consideration, proclaimed them blessed, and seems to have kept the best place in His heart for them. Hence some have argued that, in His eyes, poverty is a thing to be desired, an advantageous condition, an essential element in all Christian society, and an indispensable condition of salvation. They turn His comforting words to the poor, and the promises He made to them, into a consecration of poverty. According to them the Gospel teaching leads directly to universal and perpetual poverty. To hold any such view is completely to ignore our Lord's intention, and grossly to pervert His teaching. Nothing of the kind can justly be inferred from the sacred text. From it proceeds a penetrating fragrance of boundless pity for those who suffer or are in need. In it we read of the wretched, like Lazarus, being received into Abraham's bosom, while the rich, who refused them the ministry of kindness, are plunged into everlasting flames. It contains touching motives of patience, courage, and hope for the outcasts of life; it sings the sweet song which for centuries has soothed so many miseries, alleviated so much unhappiness, calmed such anger, restored hope to so many in despair. This is its true character.

It does not say poverty is a good thing in itself, any more than that wealth is, in itself, an evil. The Gospel deserves none of the reproaches uttered against it for its so-called anti-social theories as to contempt for riches: theories which

logically result, as is falsely supposed, in reducing production to what is strictly necessary, and to the suppression of all material well-being. Neither is it true that it represents poverty as in itself a virtue, and proclaims the spoliation of self as a more perfect state at which every true Christian should aim. No more can it be asserted with any show of truth that the Gospel regards pauperism as something natural and inevitable, of which one must take one's share, and which it would be childish to try to suppress.

1. *Nowhere does the Gospel represent poverty as in itself a virtue, or complete renunciation as a perfection at which every true Christian ought to aim.*

Detachment, not poverty, is a virtue. We should not lose sight of the fact that those who, on the Mount, were declared blessed, were not the poor, properly so called, but the poor in spirit; that is, not those who have nothing in this world, but those who cling to nothing here below, who are wholly detached from earthly goods. This detachment may exist in the midst of riches, just as it may be absent in the state of complete destitution. A man may be poor, nay, very poor, and yet be much attached to earthly things, and extremely desirous to hold property and exceedingly avaricious. Similarly, a man may be very rich, and practise detachment of heart in the highest degree, a poverty of spirit immeasurably

more precious in God's sight than real deprivation, and actual poverty, accepted with a bad grace and grudgingly borne.

Poverty does not mean salvation any more than wealth means damnation. Generously submitted to, it becomes a source of merit, and shelters men from certain dangers to which riches give rise; but, as we have before remarked, these dangers, though great and numerous, are not insurmountable. They are not such as to require us necessarily to sacrifice everything in order to avoid them. We have seen how these words of our Lord are to be understood: "Sell what you have, give the price to the poor, and follow Me." This is a counsel given only to a chosen few. Not a line of the Gospel sets forth indigence as the normal state of the just man, or as the one means of leading a Christian life.

The followers of Christ are not forbidden to work, to produce, or to build up a fortune honestly; they are, however, forbidden to be slaves to wealth, to fix their hearts on it, to consider themselves its absolute masters, to use it selfishly by refusing to help those in need. Our Lord did not consider poverty a social institution, any more than did Adam Smith or Karl Marx. Poverty is a state of suffering. Because He taught that, like every other suffering, it may be made use of for the Kingdom, it does not follow that He looked on it as good and desirable, and gave us to understand that it must be developed, or at any rate maintained, on the earth.

2. *Christ did not declare poverty to be natural and unavoidable, in which each must take his share, and which it would be futile to attempt to prevent.*

The statement here referred to is based on utterances of Christ at which socialists affect to be scandalized, and of which ultra-conservatives avail themselves in order to do as little as possible for the improvement of the lot of the labouring classes. "Jesus therefore six days before the pasch came to Bethania, where Lazarus had been dead whom Jesus raised to life. And they made Him a supper there: and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that were at the table with Him. Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of right spikenard, of great price, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, he that was about to betray Him, said: 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?' Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the purse, carried the things that were put therein. Jesus therefore said: 'Let her alone, that she may keep it against the day of My burial: for the poor you have always with you; but Me you have not always.'"[1]

It is this last sentence, so simple, so clear and

[1] John xii. 1-8.

so natural, whose meaning has been strangely distorted. Some have found in it a consecration of poverty, and a setting up of wretchedness by divine authority as a sort of institution. Starting from this common ground, one party has accused Christianity of lacking the social sense while the other has put itself at ease with regard to the obligations of charity. Their view is this: As there must always be poor people, it is idle to take any extraordinary pains to rescue one's fellow men from their unfortunate state of destitution; for poverty is part of the plan of Providence. And, when pressed, they would not shrink from saying that to try to relieve destitution and lessen the number of the unfortunate, is to run counter to the arrangements of Providence, and the special instructions of Christ.

Such an interpretation of our Lord's words is not only wholly erroneous, but it stands in complete opposition to His mentality and teaching, and is scarcely intelligible except on the hypothesis of carelessness, ignorance or want of candour. A rapid glance at the context suffices to assure us that this cannot be the meaning. An interpretation like this is wholly foreign to the obvious sense of the text.

When our Lord saw the unhappy woman who was a sinner pour ointment on His feet, and heard His disciples, and among them Judas, complain of her extravagance, saying that the price of the perfume might have been given to

the poor, He spoke those words tinged with a divine sadness: "Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached, that also which she hath done shall be told in memory of her, for she hath anointed My body for My burial. The poor you have always with you, but Me you have not always."[1]

Our Lord addressed Himself to His disciples; He made them understand the hardness of their hearts which prevented them from seeing the beauty of Magdalen's action; He reminded them, in touching words, that He was soon to leave them, adding that when He should be no longer present they would still have the poor to serve, while to Himself they would be unable to do the least personal kindness. This is the whole meaning of His words. They ought not, therefore, to be cast at those who are aiming at the destruction of pauperism; they ought rather to be erased from all controversies among Christians on the social question.[2]

As long as the world lasts there will be weak, sick and infirm, unable to provide sufficiently for themselves, and in need of public aid. Until the end of time, inequalities of fortune will exist, the fatal result of the physical, intellectual, and moral inequalities which nature herself has established among men. In spite of all efforts, these miseries will never entirely disappear; still on everyone lies the duty of endeavouring to lessen

1 Cf. Matt. xxvi. 11-13.

2 Godfrey Kurth: *Address on the Ideal of Christian Democracy,* delivered in Paris, Oct. 7th, 1906.

them as far as possible. Because we cannot effect a radical cure, we are not to think ourselves dispensed from trying to afford suitable help. And even supposing we were justified in taking the text as a declaration that poverty will always exist here below, we should have no right to use it as exempting us from an endeavour to lessen pauperism, and to eliminate the most glaring social inequalities.

3. *Our Lord has commanded us to relieve misfortune, not to perpetuate it.*

To all, to rich and poor, to His disciples of the second, as well as of the first rank, He gave the supreme rule of love of one's neighbour by active charity. His whole teaching has two poles towards which all His precepts converge: confidence in our Heavenly Father, Who is all goodness and love, and the feeling of brotherhood with the duties it implies.

These obligations of active charity are so essential a part of His moral code that many among the early Christians seem to have looked on their accomplishment or neglect as the only sign by which the elect are distinguished from the reprobate: "Come, ye blessed of My Father; I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; naked, and you clothed Me."

From the coming of Christ to the present day the duty of tenderly succouring the destitute

and of helping those in need, has been considered an elementary virtue in Christian life. Almost as great a revolution has taken place in the domain of philanthropy as in that of religion. Out of a new conception of God has sprung quite a new love of man. Pity was not wholly unknown in ancient times, but Christian charity differs essentially from pagan philanthropy. The poor and the unhappy are sacred in its eyes; it considers itself bound to share its goods with them and to sweeten their misfortune.

To give to them of our abundance is a plain and elementary duty. Words like these: "Give what thou hast to the poor; distribute thy goods to the poor," are an integral part of the Gospel. It is true that at the present day men are doing their utmost to remove poverty rather than to succour it. But those whose conduct is inspired by our Lord's teaching have also done as much as any to rid society of the sore of pauperism. Who more earnestly than they have preached justice and encouraged efforts to establish greater well-being and equality? And precisely because they have not been able to realize their generous dream, they have multiplied works of assistance and charity. They have laboured to soften what they could not prevent, and at the cost of the heaviest sacrifices, have created institutions for the benefit and relief of the poor. But their aim in so doing has not been to perpetuate wretchedness by making it tolerable—a course which

would excite it to rise up and rebel; their one object has been to fulfil the Master's command, and to lighten burdens which no one can lift from human society.

At the same time, we must admit that though this splendid expansion of charitable works proves the mighty and fruitful vitality of Christianity, and has sweetened so many sorrows, it cannot be accepted as a solution of the social question which is presented to us in these days. Other things are needed to solve it besides tokens of pity for those who suffer, and alms for those in need. In spite of its marvellous activity, charity does not suffice to satisfy all the legitimate claims of the times; these demand a strict observance of justice. Still we maintain that those go beyond the truth who assert that our Lord "foresaw and perhaps only desired the disappearance of poverty as a consequence of the establishment of the Kingdom. The complete renunciation exacted from the rich man is rather in his own spiritual interest than for the relief of the poor to whom the Kingdom is promised. The conception of a society where riches should be so distributed that none should lack food, clothing, or shelter, is not really present in the Gospel, and it needs a certain amount of predisposition to find that when Jesus, the Son of Man, had not 'where to lay His head,' He desired for every one the shelter He Himself did not possess.

"The historical truth is that the idea of a society regularly constituted according to the principles of the Gospel does not exist apart from the vision of the approaching Kingdom, where there shall be neither rich nor poor, where there shall be no question of private property or collective property, and where divine happiness is the common possession of all. There remains only for the believer the possibility, the right, the duty to draw from this ideal of the Kingdom, as from that of renunciation and from the precept of charity, such applications as are suitable to any given state of human society."[1]

To speak thus is to leave in the shade a whole section of our Lord's teaching: that, namely, in which he insists so strenuously on the duty of helping our suffering brethren, of loving our neighbour as ourselves, and of doing to others what we wish done to ourselves. He does not represent help to the poor simply as a pious way of getting rid of the wealth which might hinder salvation; He declares it to be something commanded for its own sake, constituting a strict and special duty.

But even granting that the preaching about the Kingdom does but open up a perspective of the future life by its glimpses of an age and a society in which, thanks to the full realization of human brotherhood, there will be neither rich nor poor—it still remains no less true that

1 Loisy: *The Gospel and the Church*, pp. 78-79.

this perspective reveals, as it were, a social ideal. That ideal is always pursued, and always more or less realized wherever the Gospel is preached and lived up to. And this ideal is not solely the relief of the poor, but the prevention of destitution in so far as this is possible.

4. *If, after twenty centuries, Christianity has not succeeded in removing this social disease, it would be unjust to ascribe the failure to its teachings.*

The fault in some instances must be attributed to selfishness and want of sympathy, in some to laziness, viciousness, and heedlessness of others, to the imperfection of institutions, to natural weaknesses and inequalities, to forgetfulness of the Gospel principles. Individuals have practised Christianity in its entirety—no nation has done so. Nowhere has the Christian spirit been complete master and wholly free; we cannot therefore say what the germs contained in it might have produced, had it been possible to develop them in a thoroughly congenial atmosphere. One thing is beyond question: in spite of all the unfavourable conditions amid which it has been compelled to work, it has greatly contributed to the relief of all kinds of misery, material and moral. Its efforts are incontestable, and their results undeniable.

The current scientific socialism of the day loves to talk of the abortive experiment and

failure of Christianity to solve the social question.[1] It affects superb contempt for the Gospel methods, regarding them as empirical; it can see nothing in them but worthless emollients, soothing draughts, useful at the best to lull human sorrow to sleep for the moment. It pretends to possess efficacious recipes, and flatters itself it can succeed

[1] Socialists pretend that, all things considered, the various works of charity, practised for centuries, have done more harm than good. And at the present day, they say this is still the case. It would be a mistake to continue them; they constitute a social danger. They have done but one thing; they have showed the radical powerlessness of Christianity to solve the main problem of destitution. In this it has totally failed. After twenty centuries of generous, but unintelligent, effort, there are just as much wretchedness and injustice on the earth. It has helped a few unhappy individuals, though not always the most interesting; it has done nothing to combat misery in general. It has neglected the study of the causes which produce social evils, and has busied itself only with their effects. It has proceeded empirically where it should have made use of the science of bacteriology or hygiene. Instead of laying the axe to the root, it has been content to lop off a few branches. Instead of searching out the most approved methods of beneficence, it would have done better to enquire why these methods should be necessary, and why there are poor people in the world at all. There ought not to be any at the present time, were Christian charity anything but a soothing draught administered to the unfortunate in order to prevent them from crying out.

These accusations are unjust. They always imply that Christianity has but one remedy to offer, namely, charity, for the cure of social evils. The supposition is not true. Christianity appeals to justice no less than to charity. It busies itself as much with causes as with effects. It has not been content with some ineffectual prunings: it has ever tried to get at the roots. If it has not succeeded as it could have wished, it is because there are evils here below which can only be relieved and not prevented: they will disappear only with the coming of the Kingdom.

where, according to its own expression, "Christ and His Church have pitifully failed."

That the advocates of socialism are strangely at fault in their estimate of Christianity seems to call for no lengthy demonstration. To do away with poverty altogether, it would be necessary to change, not only our social conditions, but human nature itself. If Christianity has "miserably failed," socialism will fail more miserably still. In any case, socialists may be assured that no one will rejoice more than Christians at anything that can be done to lessen the number of the disinherited and to bring about a larger measure of well-being and a more universal equality; for the true Christian is penetrated with his Master's spirit, and, like Him, full of the ideal of justice and of love.

From all that has been said in this chapter, it follows that neither in the teachings of Christ, nor in His way of acting, nor in the behaviour of the apostles, nor in the methods of the early Church, can anything be found to constitute a disapproval of private ownership, an express condemnation of wealth or even an indirect consecration of destitution. Our Lord did not advocate one kind of ownership more than another; He did not anathematize those who were in possession of personal property, but those only who held their possessions in the wrong spirit, and did not use them as they ought. He did not hide from the rich that sal-

vation is harder for them because of their wealth, and that worldly goods are an obstacle to high perfection. But His words have nothing in common with the violent abuse and hostile claims of our modern agitators. He reminded men of their duties, but He never excited antipathy; He simply stigmatized abuses.

His teaching as to earthly goods has regard for every right, and is in harmony with all lawful progress. He cannot be numbered either among the narrow conservatives who are reluctant to introduce any change whatever, or among those unwise reformers who find everything bad, and desire to upset everything. He stands at an equal distance from both extremes. With Him all is calm, sagacious, moderate, just, superhuman in its loftiness and incomparable in its serenity. He appears to us as being of a higher nature. All His teachings are stamped with divinity. Never did man speak as He did; He had words of life for this world as well as for the next.

CONCLUSION

Each century has had its special aims, its individual aspirations, and, one might say, its providential work. In ours, attention is particularly directed to social questions, and its mission seems to be to seek a remedy for the formidable struggle going on between the world of capital and the world of labour. The problem has been rudely stated by the working class, who imperiously demand its solution. No longer is the storm gathering from afar off; the tempest has already burst.

With many, it is not merely a question, as formerly, of diminishing the evils of the present order of things; the very existence of this order is challenged; according to them, we ought not to talk of bettering, but of transforming and reconstructing human society on other foundations. The new city must be built on the ruins of the old and tottering edifice; a city of justice, liberty, prosperity, kindness, and progress, in which man will be able to satisfy all his needs and will reach his full development.

During the last hundred years many programmes of reform have been brought forward,

and an amazing number of plans for a social reconstitution have been drawn up to satisfy the demands of the multitude.

Many of their authors have tried to give a frankly secular, materialist, irreligious, and anti-Christian character to their proposals. Bebel says: "The revolution in preparation will differ from its predecessors in this: it will not limit itself to seek out fresh religious formulas, but will banish religion itself." "It is beyond dispute," writes Belfort-Bax, "that Christian teaching is, to-day, more repugnant to the highest moral sentiment than the worship of Saturn and Proserpine was to the first Christians. . . . It is easy to understand why socialism cannot be religious. It despises that other world which, with its scale of rewards, is the actual object of religion. It places all its religion in this world. The hope of a better social life and the struggle to obtain it, are the socialist's ideal and religion. To keep it before his eyes, he need but counterfeit Christian rites."

At most, men of this school consent to tolerate "the other religion" as "a private matter." Not a few maintain that it should be always and everywhere combated. They consider it but as an obstacle to the realization of the socialistic ideal, a hindrance to the satisfaction of the natural appetites and a tissue of chimeras and errors with which it is impossible to agree. "If the statement, 'religion is a private matter,' is understood

to mean absolute neutrality in religious beliefs, it is so contrary to the very nature of revolutionary socialism, considered as an integral civilizing power, that the party itself, and its best representatives, cannot apply it."[1]

Two parties exist among those who glory in freedom from all religious restraint, and who stand squarely on materialistic ground. The one sees in the social question nothing but a question of economics, "A question of the stomach,"[2] which in no way arises out of the moral code, and ought to be treated independently of it. The other, on the contrary, considers it above all as a question of the moral order, presupposing the existence of a law, and affecting conscience, in the highest degree.

The former party looks on this burning question of the present day as one neither of truths nor duties, but simply as a matter of interests. "If

[1] Losinsky: Article in *Le Mouvement socialiste* of Nov. 1st, 1902, p. 1945.

The men belonging to the school of scientific socialism start from an entirely materialistic conception of history. They have borrowed all that is most extravagant in Hegelian philosophy. In their eyes the universe appears as the unconscious result of material forces. Human opinions and beliefs—religious or otherwise—are to them only a manifestation of such forces.—purely ideal abstractions, devoid of objective reality. They are born of the social life of which they form, as it were, a spontaneous product; they are economic accidents, and in no way absolute truths. A certain amount of belief and religious brotherhood corresponds to a given economic condition; such belief changes with the conditions.

[2] "It is beyond doubt," says Schaeffle, in his *Quintessence du socialisme*, "that this is an economic question; it is, at least, first of all a question of the stomach," p. 16.

we want nothing in our ranks but disinterestedness," wrote Jules Guesde in *Le Citoyen de Paris* of July 22nd, 1881, "nothing remains but to disband them; our basis is the satisfaction of interests, we boast of taking the side of the stomach, and appeal only to the interest of the masses to get them to attack private property."

On his side, Jaurès wrote in his introduction to Benedict Malon's *Social Morality*: "Socialism need not light a lamp to find a moral code—it is one in itself and by itself. . . . They, the masses, are thorough-going egoists; they want to live, and make no secret of it. They feel the vigorous impulse of involuntary instincts. . . . They avow and proclaim their egoism, and thus, instead of creeping like the sentimental ivy, they take root and plunge into nature itself, so as to change its sap into the energy of progress. Only by a living paradox, this egoism of the multitude is an impersonal egoism—a paradox often found in human nature, and helped by socialism which links the good of the individual to collective organization."

This so-called impersonal egoism has, so far, scarcely been distinguished from the other, and its results are not such as to commend the system.[1]

1 "By breaking with the whole Christian tradition," says M. Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, "by rejecting every religious idea, and pretending to banish even God from the future city of men, collectivism, far from facilitating the task before it, has made it much more difficult.

Those who advocate it have said much to the working-class about rights neglected, capitalist exploitation and the tyranny of employers; they have excited the covetousness and hatred of their hearers; they have urged them on to the attack of existing institutions and to the conquest of political power. Too often, where they have had an influence, they have but succeeded in creating class hatred, in causing fratricidal war and in replacing abuses by others quite as glaring.

It is a mistake to suppose that the one thing

While believing itself to be realistic and practical, it shows itself to be Utopian. To reject God, to reject the idea of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Christians, under pretence of casting out every metaphysical and theological hypothesis, is not alone to claim to remake man and humanity—it is to cast aside the most powerful instrument for perfecting the individual, and perhaps the most solid cohesive force in human society.

"To those who dream of leading modern nations into the shadowy and distant promised land of social justice, neither the discoveries of science, nor the strength and authority of laws, nor the attainment of power and wealth will suffice. More yet is needed: moral forces are required, capable of strengthening consciences and uniting souls. This is a matter about which socialists and modern collectivists have concerned themselves too little. More often than not, they have overlooked moral forces, and of late some of their friends have been courageous enough to blame them for their oversight. After the example of Marx, its prophet, contemporary collectivism has contented itself with being a species of economic materialism. By so doing it has not shrunk from running counter to the noblest and sublimest aspirations of the human heart. It has persuaded itself that in this lies its strength; on the contrary, it is this which constitutes its weakness and will end by causing its defeat."—*Le christianisme et le socialisme*, a lecture given at the School for Higher Studies.

necessary and all sufficient is to ensure the easy running of the social machine. Man lives not by bread alone; he needs an ideal to lift him up, a curb to restrain him, truths to enlighten him and virtues to make him capable of effort and sacrifice. No social or national life is possible if private life be not virtuous, if selfishness rules the hearts of men, if the idea of rights causes that of duty to be forgotten, if an unbridled love of pleasure destroys all discipline, if the love of the public good does not predominate over the meanness of self-love. Ingram, whose words we have already quoted, proclaimed that: "The only way to solve the problem is a reconstruction of ideas and sentiments, rising almost to the level of an intellectual and moral reform."

If we desire effectively to carry on the social revolution to the much talked of ideal of justice and general prosperity, we must first begin with a moral revolution.

The reform of society presupposes that of individuals. Without a reform on these lines, every attempt would result in a selfish pursuit of prey, and the old saying, taken up by Hobbes, would be verified: "Man is a wolf to his fellow man." The morrow of the overturning of the present social order would witness examples as disorderly, wickedness as vile, tyranny, suffering and brutality as unbearable as those complained of to-day.

This is why most theorists in socialism have

abandoned the idea of reform apart from morality, of which we have just spoken. They admit that to cure existing evils, satisfy the needs of men and set up the city of their dreams, more is required than mere natural forces, development of wealth, or progress in science. They are daily more and more concerned about morality, and they agree with us in acknowledging that of all forms of government, democracy, towards which modern society is tending, is the one which makes the heaviest demand on the individual virtues of the citizen.

They are at one with us as to the necessity of a moral law, but maintain that its basis should be essentially secular; that is, independent of all religion, and even, according to some, of all metaphysics. At the closing of the congress of the League of Instruction, in September, 1904, M. Ferdinand Buisson said: "The evil, the danger, or as Gambetta expressed it, the enemy, is not this or that belief, such or such a religious or political doctrine—it is the claim to attach morality to any dogma whatsoever; it is the authoritative dogmatism which subjects human reason and conscience to its yoke. The essential effort of the secular spirit is to cast off this yoke from society and from individuals." And, before separating, the members of the congress voted the following declaration: "Morality is of a natural origin and the product of human evolution; its regular methodical treatment will impart to it

more of the character of true science. It is, therefore, absolutely independent of all religion and metaphysics, and essentially secular. Its objects are man's earthly prosperity, material as well as spiritual, social progress and human happiness."

Starting from these principles which they consider unassailable, the partizans of independent morality have done all they could to find a "human groundwork." Unable to speak of a *morality of self-interest,* which is tantamount to the denial of morality, they have imagined a *morality of evolution,* and a *morality of solidarity.*

This is not the place to sum up and criticise the systems they have tried to build up, not only apart from, but opposed to God and the Gospel. We can, however, assert without fear of contradiction, that they are totally incapable of providing morality with the required basis. They have deceived the hopes reposed in them; they have led to a bankruptcy which even such men as MM. Buisson, Fournière, Séailles, and Deherme do not dream of disputing. These men who are counted among our adversaries, do not conceal their alarm as to a deficiency, the dangerous consequences of which they understand better than anyone. "Without God," said M. G. Deherme, "we have not yet been able to invent an effectual moral code. . . . We find our hearts to-day emptied by philosophical criticism. All that has so far been offered to us as independ-

ent, scientific, rational or positivist morality, is but a parody and a distortion of religious morality."[1]

M. Payot lets fall the same avowal. "The secular school," he writes in the *Volume*, "is suffering from a re-action of the moral crisis which has disorganized French thought for a quarter of a century. The men who ought to throw light on the road, throw light on nothing; they are themselves in the dark. Nothing is so strange as a discussion on morality with educated men of thirty-five to fifty years of age. They have given up Catholicism, and but a short time is needed to see that they have put nothing in its place, and that their life is guided by their former habits of feeling and thought.

"What have they taught us in the secondary schools? Kantism! That is, a theological morality from which God has been eliminated, while they are at liberty to restore Him by an intellectual sleight-of-hand. Duty! This comes neither from earth nor Heaven, but is very convenient, since it allows God and immortality to be re-instated after having been expelled by reason. How can we expect generations brought up under this *régime* of thorough insincerity, to be able to undertake the direction of a moral regeneration? Not a book on morality which one can bear to read, has been written during the last quarter of a century."

[1] *La Coopération des idées*, July 1st, 1903.

These lay moralists are unable to point out the origin, foundation, object or aim of the morality of which they have made themselves the distinctly secular apostles. They can give no satisfactory answer to those who ask why they are obliged to live, to toil, to be upright, to make sacrifices, to restrain their appetites, to devote themselves to the service of others, and to pursue with all their strength a lofty moral ideal. The variety of reasons they supply betrays the difficulty they find in establishing their conclusions on a firm and scientific foundation.

To inspire with respect for virtue and love of duty those whom they pretend to educate, they talk to them of solidarity and altruism; they extol the beauty of self-denial and the excellence of sacrifice for the common cause; but their arguments, though perhaps capable of impressing natures specially endowed, are powerless to produce any serious effect on the masses. They are understood only by a very small minority; and the axioms on which they endeavour to rest their first principles, have no value for those materialized natures which invariably prefer tangible utility to the satisfaction, which they feebly experience, in the accomplishment of social duty.

To put self-denial into men's hearts in place of the instincts of selfishness implies a reconstruction of human nature, which leads us to seek our own satisfaction in everything, and to make our personal interests prevail over those of others.

This reconstruction is possible only under the influence of a moral law strong enough to impose a real obligation beyond all criticism and sufficient for the conduct of life.

To discover a law thus adequate we have to turn to Heaven and ask it of God himself. Men, with their paltry systems, have shown themselves powerless to set on foot an acceptable and efficacious moral code. According to Benedict Malon: "We can count on our fingers the men whom philosophy has ennobled. Four pages would contain the history of the aristocracy grouped under this title. The remainder, given up to its dreams, fears, fiction or avarice, have rushed pell-mell through the dangerous valleys of instinct and delirium. They have endeavoured to find a justification for their action and beliefs in the bewilderment of their brains and in the impulses of their hearts."[1]

Given the meagre results produced by materialistic secularism, in the social field as in others, the simplest common sense demands a return to religion and the Gospel. Without this, certain material results, successful and considerable, may perhaps be obtained; but the moral uplifting of humanity will never be reached, and without this every attempt at social reorganization will be in vain. We may read in the following lines how perplexing the moral outlook appeared to the rationalist Renan: "The serious thing is that we

[1] *La morale sociale*, p. 207.

fail to perceive a means of providing humanity in the future with a catechism that will be acceptable henceforth, except on the condition of returning to a state of credulity (say, rather: faith). Hence, it is possible that the ruin of idealistic beliefs may be fated to follow hard upon the ruin of supernatural beliefs, and that the real abasement of the morality of humanity will date from the day it has seen (?) the reality of things."[1]

Belief in the existence of God can alone establish amid our egoistic activities, the bond indispensable to the progress of social life. Men may think that the direction given at the present time to certain disinterested actions, and to certain outbursts of moral generosity, resting on the idea of God, has not been socially the most desirable. They may even be of the opinion that its practical results have often fallen below the value of the forces used. They cannot, however, deny that in these days, as in the past, the idea of God has been the moving principle of moral lives, admirable in their generosity and loftiness.

No sociologist is so ill-informed as to be ignorant of "the effective share of quite tangible social products" which belief in God has furnished, and continues daily to bring forth.[2]

[1] Renan: *The Future of Science*, Preface, p. xviii.

[2] The remark has been justly made that the three great minds which have pursued the methodical and objective study of human society the furthest, and have helped to found social science—Frederick Le Play, Auguste Comte, and Taine—agree in declaring the social necessity of

"To quote only one example," continues M. P. Bureau, "who would venture to deny that in our time, the idea of God is the true and only rampart for the triple principle of purity in the young, conjugal fidelity and the fruitfulness of marriage? Who can say into what muddy depths we should plunge, were religious sentiment no longer present to maintain, on these three points, a firm doctrinal barrier? How would society fare if we were to eliminate the religious principle of action in the moral struggles which the growing disorganization of conduct renders each day more heroic?"

To fulfil his whole duty, man needs, as we have said, strength, light and restraint from without; he needs, moreover, an ideal. All these are to be found in religion, and nowhere else in the same degree. "Religious sentiment," writes Professor William James, the late head of the American Psychological School, "undeniably produces a joyful excitement, a dynamic expansion which gives tone and vigour to the vital powers. It is a biological, as well as a psychological, condition. Tolstoy expresses the exact truth when he calls faith *that which makes men live.*"[1]

religious teaching and of belief in a divinity. At first all three professed an opposite doctrine, and yet all three have been obliged to yield to the necessity of social fact.

Although up to the last very far from the Christian faith, Auguste Comte has often paid willing homage to the eminently social genius of Catholicism. From this point of view it is interesting to consult the 54th chapter in his *Course of Positive Philosophy.*

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 505.

Almost everywhere at the present day there is evidence of a disconcerting and alarming want of moral discipline. Not only do the masses refuse to obey rules hitherto almost universally accepted; they have even come to question the authority of precepts which seemed part of the inalienable moral inheritance of mankind. We are spectators of what has been called, "the disappearance of moral dogmas."

The coincidence of this disappearance with the wavering of religious beliefs among the people cannot be denied, any more than that it is deeply prejudicial to the proper working of social life. Indeed, if there is one fact less and less disputed, it is that social progress can be realized only by the moral progress of the individual. Every observer, of whatever philosophical school, provided he be impartial, will admit that the men who, now as in the past, have carried furthest the perfection of individual life, and who do most honour to humanity by their integrity of character—"*splendid men fine citizens,*" as the Americans call them, are men whose moral and social doctrine "is closely linked with deep religious sentiment and intensely powerful spiritual convictions."[1]

We say with a vigorous and original thinker of our day, let men cease to reproach Christian doctrine with being but the rampart of an author-

[1] Cf. Brunetière: *La religion comme sociologie*, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Feb. 15th, 1903.

itative system and of a decayed social organization. Let them rather recognize that were it possible to translate the social ideal of the Gospel into legislation, a society would arise without rich or poor, without armies, or the desire of brutal foreign conquest, without exploitation of the weak, without tribunals, police or prisons; that is to say, a system exactly the opposite of that which the Gospel of good tidings is accused of helping to maintain, and equally opposed, also, to the one into which atheistic materialism is every day plunging us deeper and deeper.

Interior renovation of the individual can only be brought about by moral teaching perfectly suited to the real needs of modern social life. From this point of view, the Gospel offers us a teaching which is perfect; a lofty and incomparable teaching. It contains all that can be desired to satisfy the heart, to enlighten the understanding, to attract the will and to enable us to use the self-control which makes a virtuous man and a good citizen.

As we have many times observed, one of the most remarkable characteristics of the Gospel is that it seems to have been written for all time, and devised to help to solve each special problem arising at various epochs in the history of mankind. By going back to the teaching of our Lord, all periods of civilization have found what was best adapted to their needs and aims. In proportion as changes have taken place in

human interests, this teaching seems to have gained quite a fresh value and import, such, indeed, as had not previously been thought of. One might say that each change had not only been foreseen, but provided for by the Divine Reformer, who had it in His mind when speaking at such or such a time. Whoever seeks light from the Gospel will find it for every situation and circumstance. Each time the rock is struck, an abundant stream of living water gushes forth; it is there for all tastes, for all needs and for all generations.

To borrow once more the words of Peabody: "Does this divergence of impression mean that each age and each scholar creates a new Christ, and that what seems to be an historical figure is in reality only the reflection of the inquirer's mind thrown upon the screen of the past? Is it only the pious imaginations of successive students which make of Jesus now the source of a theology and now the founder of a Church, now peasant, now king, now the deliverer from doubt? On the contrary, the life of Jesus has, in fact, all these aspects, and, indeed, many more; and it is not as false interpreters, but as partial witnesses, that men stand in their own place and report that view of the Gospel which presents itself to their minds. This extraordinary capacity for new adaptations, this quality of comprehensiveness in the teaching of Jesus, which so many evidences of the past illustrate, prepares us to

our turn for its fresh applicability to the question which most concerns the present age. As it has happened a thousand times before, so it is likely to happen again, that the Gospel, examined again with a new problem in mind, will seem again to have been written in large to meet the needs of the new age. Words and deeds which other generations have found perplexing or obscure may be illuminated with meaning, as one now sees them in the light of the new social agitation and hope. It will seem, perhaps, as it has seemed so often before, that no other age could have adequately appreciated the teaching of Jesus; as if His prophetic mind must have looked across the centuries and discerned the distant coming of social conflicts and aspirations which in His own time were insignificant, but which are now universal and profound."[1]

[1] Peabody: *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, pp. 73, 74.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

BAX (E. BELFORT) : Author, socialist : born at Leamington 1854. Prominent member of the Social Democratic Federation from 1882. Edited *The Commonweal,* in conjunction with William Morris; for some time editor of *Justice.* Has written *Ethics of Socialism; Outlook from the New Standpoint; The Problem of Reality;* &c.

BEBEL (F. AUGUST) (1840-) : Most prominent socialist in Germany; member of the Reichstag; at first actively engaged in promoting co-operation; from 1866 joined the party of Marx and Lassalle; connected with the journal *Vorwärts* from 1891. Among his writings are : *Christianity and Socialism; Woman under Socialism.*

BOUGLE : Professor of social philosophy at the University of Toulouse. Anti-clerical in his views and attempts to re-establish society on a basis of "solidarity." He has written : *Vie spirituelle et action sociale; Qu'est-ce que la sociologie?; Le solidarisme.*

BOURGEOIS (LÉON) : Born at Paris 1851 : senator for La Marne; several times minister and president of the Council; represents France at the Hague Peace Conference; author of *Education de la démocratie; Applications de la solidarité sociale.*

BRUNETIÈRE (FERDINAND) (1849-1906) : Literary critic and professor; member of the Academy; a writer of remarkable brilliance on the staff of the *Revue Bleue;* some time editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes;* became a Catholic in 1900. Wrote *Histoire et littérature; Discours de combat; Raisons actuelles de croire.*

BUISSON (FERDINAND) (1841-) : From 1896 professor of pedagogy at the Sorbonne; leader of the secularist movement in education.

BUREAU (PAUL) : Professor at the Institut Catholique, Paris : author of *La Crise morale des temps nouveaux* (placed on the Index, the writer submitting to the condemnation) ; *Le Contrat de travail; Le rôle des syndicats professionels.*

CABET (1786-1856) : French socialist ; founded a socialistic community in Texas 1848.

DE CHAMPAGNY (FRANCOIS J.) (1804-1882) : Catholic writer ; member of the Academy ; wrote *La Charité chrétienne dans les premiers siècles de l'Eglise* (1854), also from 1860 to 1875 works on the Roman Empire.

COMTE (AUGUSTE) (1798-1857) : French philosopher and mathematician ; founder of the religion of Positivism and of the system of Positivist Philosophy ; chief work : *Course of Positive Philosophy* (condensed into 2 vols. by Harriet Martineau 1853).

DEHERME (G.)?

DEVILLE (GABRIEL) : Socialist writer and worker ; in active co-operation with Jules Guesde in 1878.

DUHEM : Professor of the Faculty of Science at Bordeaux.

FONSEGRIVE-LESPINASSE (G. P.) (1852-) : Catholic social philosopher and brilliant writer ; professor at the Lycée ; editor of *La Quinzaine;* has written much under the pseudonym of Yves le Querdec ; author also of *Mariage et Union libre; La crise sociale; Lettres d'un curé de campagne; Lettres d'un curé de canton.*

GARRIGUET (LÉON) : Catholic social writer ; superior of the Toulouse seminary. Author of *Régime du travail; Régime de la propriété; La Valeur sociale de l'Evangile.*

GOYAU (GEORGE) : Distinguished Catholic writer (pseudonym Léon Gregoire) on social and other subjects, among which may be mentioned : *Autour du Catholicisme Social; Ketteler.*

GUESDE (JULES) : French socialist leader ; in 1879 collaborated with Marx, Engels and La Fargue ; since his election as deputy for Roubaix in 1893 has been an active member of the socialist party. Was for some time editor of the *Citoyen,* the *Cri du Peuple,* and founded the *Egalité.*

GUIZOT (FRANCOIS) (1787-1874): Historian, statesman and deputy for Lisieux; a moderate liberal in politics and a Huguenot in religion. The works among his writings which approach nearest to the matter of the present volume are: *History of Civilization; Cours d'Histoire moderne.*

HARNACK (ADOLF) (1851-): Lutheran professor of Church history; leader of the critical school of theology and a prolific writer. Among his works may be mentioned: *The History of Dogma; The Apostolic Age; What is Christianity?*

HERRON (G. DAVIS): Socialist lecturer; born 1862 at Montezuma, Md. (United States); Congregationalist minister, but ultimately renounced definite Christian beliefs (1900); editor of *The Industrialist;* among his numerous writings are: *The Larger Christ; The New Redemption; The Christian State.*

HUGHES (HUGH PRICE) (1847-1902): Wesleyan minister and writer of influence; his vigorous book *Social Christianity* has passed through several editions.

HUGO (VICTOR) (1802-1885): The most illustrious French poet of his age and founder with Sainte-Beuve of the French Romantic School. Began as a royalist and ended as a republican; a liberal in religion.

D'HULST (MGR.) (1841-1896): First rector of the Institut at Paris; preacher at Notre Dame (1891-1896). Among his published works are: *Conférences; Mélanges oratoires; Le Droit chrétien et le droit moderne.*

INGRAM (JOHN KELLS) (1823-1907): A scholar of repute, and writer of the article on Political Economy in the Encyclopædia Britannica, reprinted in many languages.

IRELAND (MONSIGNOR JOHN): Archbishop of St. Paul, Minnesota (1884-).

JAMES (WILLIAM) (1842-1910): Professor of Psychology at Harvard University; a well-known writer on psychological subjects, and one of the leading exponents of Pragmatism. His chief works are: *Principles of Psychology* (1890); *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902); *Pragmatism* (1908).

JANET (PAUL) (1823-1899) : Professor at the Sorbonne; rationalist in philosophy; wrote *Histoire de la science politique.*

JAURÈS (JEAN LÉON) (1859-) : French socialist leader; professor at Albi and Toulouse; deputy 1885-1890; adopted socialistic views and was elected for Albi 1893; chief of the socialist party in the French Chamber. In 1898 editor of *La Petite République,* and later of *l'Humanité;* wrote *Studies in Socialism* (translated 1906).

JUSTIN (Saint and Martyr) (100-167) : Christian writer; a convert from paganism; greatest of the early apologists. His First Apology written between 139-150.

KETTELER (WILLIAM EMMANUEL) (1811-1877) : Baron, Bishop of Mayence (1850-1877); the illustrious forerunner of modern Catholic social workers. Author of *Liberty, Authority and the Church* (1862); *Germany after the War of 1866; May a Catholic be a Freemason?* (1865); *The Labour Question and Christianity* (1864); *Catholics in the German Empire* (1873).

KURTH (GODEFRIED) : Historian; professor at Liège since 1872; a supporter of the Christian democratic party in Belgium.

LABOULAYE (J. R. F.) (1814-) : Publicist and professor of law; entered the French Chamber on the fall of the Empire in 1871, joining the opposition; retired from political life a few years later on being appointed head of the Collège de France.

LACTANTIUS (250-325) : Christian apologist; convert from paganism; called, on account of the beauty of his style, the Christian Cicero. *The Divine Institutes,* a work against paganism, is the most important of his writings.

LAVELEYE (ÉMILE LOUIS DE) (1822-1892) : Professor of political economy at Liège from 1865; dealt with social problems from a Protestant point of view; styled a "liberal academic socialist"; a constant contributor to the *Revue des Deux Mondes;* wrote *De la Propriété et ses formes primitives; Socialisme contemporain.*

LEROY-BEAULIEU (ANATOLE) (1842-): Catholic economist and member of the Institut. Author of: *Christianisme et démocratie; Christianisme et socialisme; Congrégations religieuses et l'expansion de la France.*

LESÊTRE (H.): Curé of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, Paris; writer in the *Revue Pratique d'Apologétique.*

LOISY (ALFRED) (1857-): Sometime lecturer in Hebrew at the Institut Catholique, Paris; and subsequently professor of Assyriology at the Sorbonne. His novel opinions aroused much opposition, and in 1903 four of his works met with condemnation from the Holy See. His chief writings are: *The Synoptic Gospels; The Fourth Gospel; The Gospel and the Church; Autour d'un petit livre.*

LOSINSKY (?)

LUGAN (A.): Writer in the *Univers* under the pseudonym of Louis Dagaulin; has published *L'Enseignement social de Jésus; L'Action Française et l'idée chrétienne.*

MALAPERT (PAULIN): Professor of philosophy at the Lycée Henri IV., Paris. Though inclined towards positivism he is opposed to a materialistic interpretation of the soul; has published *Leçons de philosophie,* 2 vols., 1907-8.

MALON (BENEDICT): Socialist writer; author of *Socialisme intégral.*

MARX (KARL) (1818-1883): Founder of modern scientific socialism by means of his book on *Capital;* took a leading part in the spread of the International Society. His influence is now on the wane.

MONOD (WILFRID): Protestant writer.

NAUMANN (FRIEDERICK) (1860-): Protestant clergyman; editor of *Hilfe;* author of many works, among which are: *The Christian Socialist* (1894-6); *Jesus as a man of the people* (1894); *The State and the Family* (1899); writer for the South German *Monatshefte.*

NITTI (F. S.): Professor of political economy in the University of Naples; an unreliable exponent of Catholic social principles; a contributor to the *Economic Review;* author of *Population and the*

Social System; Catholic Socialism (translated 1895).

PAYOT (JULES) : Rector of the Academy of Chambèry ; editor of *Le Volume;* author of *La Morale à l'école; Cours de morale* (condemned by the French Bishops).

PEABODY (FRANCIS GREENWOOD) (1847-) : Professor of Christian Morals in Harvard University ; his work *Jesus Christ and the Social Question* (1900) has been many times reprinted.

PICARD (E.) ?

RENAN (ERNEST) (1823-1902) : Historian and brilliant writer of the rationalist school ; tinged with positivism and with scepticism, which he imbibed from Berthelot. Among his works are : *The Future of Science; The Life of Jesus; Origines de Christianisme; Essais de Morale et Critique.*

SCHWALM (BENEDICT) (1860-1903) : French Dominican and writer of great promise on theological, apologetical and social subjects. He applied the principles of St. Thomas Aquinas to the problems of the present time. See *Revue Thomiste* (1893-1896). He published *Leçons de philosophie sociale;* and *Le type social du paysan juif à l'époque de Jésus Christ* (1908).

SOREL (GEORGE) : The best informed and most sagacious of French socialists ; author of *Ruine du monde antique; L'Avenir socialiste des syndicats.*

SPENCER (HERBERT) (1820-1903) : The philosopher of Agnosticism and exponent of the universal application of the hypothesis of evolution ; an individualist and strongly opposed to socialism. In addition to the *Synthetic Philosophy* his chief works are : *Social Statics; Justice; Man v. the State.*

STOECHER : A German clergyman who has done much for the foundation of a Christian socialistic party.

TERTULLIAN (160-220) : The greatest Christian writer of the school of North Africa except St. Augustine ; a convert from paganism ; quitted the Church on account of his rigoristic views

shortly after the year 200. Wrote against pagans Jews and heretics. The *Apologetic* is one of his most celebrated works.

TODT (RODOLF)?

VANDERVELDE (EMILE) (1868-): The leading Belgian socialist; a copious writer from 1892 onwards. Among his more recent works are: *L'Exode rural et le retour aux champs* (Paris 1903); *Essais sur la Question agraire en Belgique* (Paris 1903); *Collectivism v. Industrial Evolution.*

VERNES (MAURICE) (1845-): A Protestant and rationalist writer on philosophy and religion. He has published: *Le Protestantisme et la philosophie experimentale; L'Histoire des religions, son esprit, sa méthode et ses définitions;* &c.

WENDT (HANS H.) (1853-): German professor of philosophy and theology; author of many scriptural works.

ZOLA (EMILE) (1840-1902): A powerful, obscene, realistic and anti-Christian writer. Among his productions may be named here: *La Joie de vivre; La Bête humaine; Lourdes; Rome.*

Lect: Social Theology 127

Lect: Socialism from [illegible] 123

Lect: Slavery 88

104 Why do not slaves.

105 Onesimus.

Slavery { work without reward / inhuman work not free } ⇄ Dig of wo

Dignity of work

94 [illegible] not by property

131 - Not idleness

X - Work 132 - but confidence in God

17092